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Mensural Intertextuality in the Sacred Music of Antoine Busnoys

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ONE can say many things about Johannes Tinctoris, but not that he was afraid to hold unpopular views on music theory.[1] His treatises show an unwavering adherence to 'truth' and 'reason', even in cases where no other compositions than his own (which modesty forbade him to mention)[2] exemplified those criteria. Faced with almost universal contrary practice on several of his teachings (including in the works of Antoine Busnoys), Tinctoris was fighting a losing battle, it seems, yet battling on nevertheless.

This is a position that must have required some intellectual courage, yet we should probably not overestimate that aspect. For in a sense Tinctoris belonged to two worlds. As a university teacher,[3] his primary allegiance was to the seven liberal arts (including music) as an internally consistent body of scientific knowledge. Here his criteria of 'truth' and 'reason' were backed by centuries of scholastic thought, and ultimately by the authority of 'the Philosopher', Aristotle.

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[1] References in this contribution are to Johannes Tinctoris, *Opera theoretica*, ed. Albert Seay (CSM 22; American Institute of Musicology, 1975–8), quoted here with corrections after the manuscripts (kindly supplied by Dr Bonnie Blackburn) and changed punctuation. Abbreviations are as follows: lower-case roman numerals refer to books, arabic numerals to chapters, and to sentences as numbered in Seay's edition; individual treatises are abbreviated as follows: *Liber de natura et proprietate tonorum* (*T*); *Proportiionale musices* (*P*); *Liber de arte contrapuncti* (*C*); *Diffinitorium* (*D*); *Tractatus alterationum* (*A*); *Expositio manus* (*M*); *Liber imperfectionum notarum* (*I*); *Super punctis musicalibus* (*SPM*).

[2] Except when his works had been criticized by others, as in the case of the *Missa Nos amis* (*A* Prologus 3–6). For this work, see Reinhard Strohm, 'Die Missa super "Nos amis" von Johannes Tinctoris', *Musikforschung* 32 (1979), 34–51, and id., 'Meßzyklen über deutsche Lieder in den Trienter Codices', in *Liedstudien: Festschrift für Wolfgang Osthoff zum 60. Geburtstag* (Tutzing, 1989), 77–106.

[3] On the probability that Tinctoris taught law (and possibly music) at the university of Naples, see Rob C. Wegman, *Born for the Muses: The Life and Masses of Jacob Obrecht* (Oxford, 1994), 75.

Within this world it would have required much more courage to propose or defend violations of that consistency than to censure them.[4] Such violations had almost become the order of the day in the other world to which Tinctoris belonged, that of everyday musical practice. With that world the theorist had a far more uneasy relationship. Occasionally, when he criticizes the 'errors' of contemporary composers, one can almost sense him being embarrassed at what scholars in the other liberal arts might think (e.g. the 'arithmetici' in *P* iii. 2. 16–17).

It would seem, then, that Tinctoris felt at home in one world much more than in the other, and that this could perhaps explain his somewhat isolated position in the latter. Yet it is doubtful that he would have agreed with this view. For one thing, Tinctoris was a professional musician himself, with a distinguished career as a singer, teacher, choirmaster, and composer. For another, and more importantly, for him there could only be *one* art of music—not divided, but at most perhaps including practitioners who did not fully understand the art, and who were consequently in need of fuller instruction (*P* Prologus 13–19). Why dignify the incompetent with a world of their own? No musician could escape the teachings of the liberal arts, particularly mathematics (*T* 1. 6; *P* Prologus 15), even in such basic matters as pitch relationships (*Speculum musices*; see *M* 8. 20), the counting of rhythmic values (*I* 3. 53), proportional relationships (*P* i. 1. 3), and indeed any conception of number and multiplicity (*P* iii. 7). This being so, such teachings had best be worked out and applied consistently, lest musicians follow them in one case and contradict them in another (as he complained, for instance, in *P* iii. 5. 9–10).

It is this vision of a unified and intellectually respectable art of music that gave Tinctoris the courage to attack the most prominent composers of his day. In 1476 he dedicated a treatise to Antoine Busnoys and Johannes Ockeghem, two composers whom he had severely criticized four years earlier, in the *Proportionale musices* (*P*). In the preface to his new treatise, the *Liber de natura et proprietate tonorumi* (*T*), he firmly if somewhat undiplomatically stood by his criticisms, repeating that 'you have used the signs of proportion wrongly without any regard for censures or corrections' (Prologus 5).

Debates over proportions could make tempers rise even then. One northern musician, who apparently claimed expertise and authority in the art of music, had been so outraged by the criticisms in the *Proportionale* that he had threatened to make Tinctoris eat the treatise if ever he returned to his native land. Yet the theorist remained unimpressed even by threats of violence. Metaphorically, he

[4] It is probable, for instance, that Bartolomé Ramos de Pareja failed to obtain a public lectureship at the University of Bologna because of the unorthodox teachings in his treatise *Musica practica* (1482). See Bonnie J. Blackburn, Edward E. Lowinsky, and Clement A. Miller (eds.), *A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians* (Oxford 1991), 463–5 and 1009–11.

replied, the treatise should indeed be digested, and in fact its contents had been gestated in him before he wrote it (*T* Prologus 13–16, confirming that much of *P* may have been worked out well before its completion date). Nevertheless, Tinctoris noted with glee that he had since then returned many times to the North, without suffering any harm.[5]

Tinctoris versus Busnoys

We are of course most fortunate in having contemporary criticisms of Busnoys's mensural habits, and indeed one can recognize most of these habits in his surviving works. Yet what do they tell us about the composer? For Tinctoris the answer would have been clear: Busnoys, although pre-eminent in Latinity (*P* iii. 3. 9), was not above committing errors that suggest a less than thorough grasp of mensural theory. Yet is not self-evident that we should necessarily see things Tinctoris's way. After all, it is Busnoys who was the more gifted, prolific, and successful composer. And to him, minor deviations from theoretical dogma might well have been a matter of relative indifference, representing either trifling variations in musical orthography, or perhaps the unavoidable consequence of artistic innovation. By contrast, Tinctoris, in seizing on such deviations, might conceivably be regarded as a hair-splitting pedant, a prototypical 'theorist' out of touch with practical reality. And when it comes to mensural usage, one might argue that Busnoys, in committing the alleged errors, gave them a certain authority based on practical currency. After all, what is theory more than the codification of practice? And even if we do not wish to 'take sides', might we not simply conclude that Tinctoris and Busnoys had different viewpoints on mensural theory, and that it is not our task to evaluate them in terms of right and wrong?

There are several historical assumptions involved in these questions—none of them necessarily inappropriate. One can defend Busnoys (if he needs our defence) by assuming that mensural notation can be likened somewhat to

[5] 'When the *Proportionale* became widely available, some persons, and one in particular, who is unworthy to be named not only here but in any other honourable and liberal work of instruction, as being devoid of all good arts, adjudged that I deserved rightly to be branded with the mark of abuse. In addition, this one man, who is the most ridiculous of all singers [*cantores*, not *musici*], was not afraid to threaten me with the forcible eating of that little book if ever I should return to my native land, on the ground that, as has been stated above, I had attempted to blame your misuse of signs of proportion. O words most worthy of a wise man! O menaces most seemly in a brave man! To be sure, what he predicted so wisely and what he threatened so bravely has happened to me honourably; I have repeatedly returned to my native land since this, time after time. For although my body is far removed from it, my mind, constantly remembering my family and friends, is only a short distance away or not at all. Have I not eaten the book too? Indeed I have, as the Spirit said to Ezekiel: "Thy belly shall eat, and thy bowels shall be filled with this book." [Ezek. 3: 3; Ezekiel continues: "And I did eat it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth."] I am not ashamed to declare that it came true of me. For what is to eat a book but to consider what it contains with great care, and for one's bowels to be filled with it, but, having considered it, to remember it with an indelible memory? Both before and after I had published this *Proportionale* I had most diligently devoted myself to considering its content.' (*T* Prologus 6–18).

language, and by invoking linguistic concepts such as 'usage' and 'currency' (rather than 'truth' and 'reason'). This is a dynamic image, and it can do historical justice to the fact that mensural habits did indeed change over time,[6] that theory tended to accommodate such changes in the long run, and that several of Busnoys's 'errors' did eventually receive theoretical validation. In this view, Tinctoris's criteria of 'truth' and 'reason' would not have been timeless and objectively decidable, but subject to historical change—as the subsequent course of music theory only confirms. Mensural 'correctness' would be defined basically by historical precedent, and thus we could perhaps value Busnoys's role positively by assuming that he set several influential precedents.[7]

Yet this is not how Tinctoris would have viewed it, and we need to do justice to his position as well. He would not have denied that the mensural system comprises such a wide variety of available mensurations, proportions, and ways of notating their countless permutations, that it was quite possible for a composer to develop a personal 'usage', if only by consistently preferring some devices over others. (He did recommend, of course, that each composition cover as much of the available 'variety' as possible; see *C* iii. 8.) Nor would he have denied that such preferences could change over time.

Yet over and above such legitimate wanderings within the system he maintained the received view, in which the system itself was a science that proceeded from axioms, like mathematics or geometry (cf. *P* i. 1. 3). That is to say, the entire framework of musical knowledge was deduced in Aristotelian fashion from a number of given axioms (*elementa*, *principia*, *generales regulae*), such as note, value, hexachord, the rule of like before like, and so on. It was a closed system, in the sense that it was defined by what was logically possible, in the same way that mathematics allows valid theorems but rules out invalid ones. To move beyond its boundaries and still insist on theoretical validity was to lapse into logical contradiction. To use a modern analogy, it was like saying that, following the compass, one can move further north than the North Pole. In Tinctoris's view this would not be expanding or developing the system but corrupting it, and any invocation of historical precedent would be a matter of the blind leading the blind, wandering away from 'the clarity of truth' (*P* iii. 2. 20).

Tinctoris did not lay exclusive claim to 'truth' and 'reason'. Every composer who notated his music mensurally indicated, by the very act of doing so, his acceptance of established principles, thereby affirming the common ground from which the theorist could identify the few logical contradictions, rightly calling

[6] For a detailed study of the changing mensural habits of one 15th-c. composer, see Charles Hamm, *A Chronology of the Works of Guillaume Dufay Based on a Study of Mensural Practice* (Princeton, NJ, 1964).

[7] As Pietro Aaron, for instance, did in 1523, when he commented on Busnoys's use of *prolatio maior* augmentation: 'Since he was a great man and an excellent musician, this is not to be considered an error on his part, and the same thing is not to be condemned in Ockeghem and other ancients, and in Obrecht and Josquin, who followed the footsteps of their predecessors.' Quoted after Richard Taruskin, 'Antoine Busnoys and the *L'Homme armé* Tradition', *JAMS* 39 (1986), 255–93 at 290.

them errors. (It would have been pointless for him to proceed from the same basis in discussing details of tablature, score, or stroke notation, which represented different notational worlds altogether.) In this sense 'truth', as invoked by Tinctoris, was indeed objectively decidable.

Yet the historical truth is that mensural practice did change very much like a language, and frequently moved beyond its theoretically defined boundaries. In the fifteenth-century repertory one can find numerous notational conventions that had no logical relationship with any of the basic axioms, and often patently contradicted them.[8] Tinctoris reacted to such conventions in a way that could almost be described as intellectual overkill. Invariably he seized upon errors in compositions (rather than on viewpoints maintained in other treatises),[9] and proceeded to rebut them as if they were propositions defended in an academic disputation. As a rhetorical strategy this does indeed make the issue of 'truth' seem vitally important—much more so, one feels, than it would have been in the everyday lives of most musicians. But it also has the side-effect of elevating relatively trivial habits, even forms of shorthand (as with proportions, *P* iii. 2. 16–21), to theoretically grounded positions. The narrowly scholastic terms on which Tinctoris conducted these debates makes one feel that a split between two worlds was almost inevitable.

Returning to Busnoys, for instance, it is hard to say whether Tinctoris's criticisms point to anything as weighty as an actual difference of opinion. To be sure, when it comes to right and wrong, at least in medieval scientific terms, Tinctoris is invariably right. Yet whereas this evidently mattered a great deal to him, one cannot be sure how much it really mattered to Busnoys. That, in a way, is the central question of this essay: how seriously did Busnoys take his mensural usage, given that it was so idiosyncratic, and became subject to such heated dispute in the 1470s? One reason why this question is difficult to answer is that any simple juxtaposition between Busnoys and Tinctoris will inevitably stereotype either, and make us neglect a crucial complicating factor: the extensive common ground they in fact shared.

It might be tempting, for instance, to regard Busnoys as the prototypical creative genius, as an artist who could validate notational 'errors' simply by dint of writing them, or even transcend theoretical issues altogether by sheer force of musicianship. Yet this would involve a negative image of theory that is anachronistic as well as inappropriate. Whatever may have caused Busnoys to depart from the system as codified by Tinctoris, it cannot have been the irresistible force of artistic innovation, if only because the theorist emphasized in almost every case

[8] For a rich anthology of such conventions, with many musical examples from the contemporary repertory, see J. A. Bank, *Tactus, Tempo and Notation in Mensural Music from the 13th to the 17th Century* (Amsterdam, 1972).

[9] Except perhaps obliquely, for instance, when he observed that a minim under duple proportion is sometimes wrongly called semiminim 'as some unlearned babble' (*P* i. 4. 8).

that correct alternatives were available within the system. The alternatives may occasionally look a little contrived (as they tend to do in Tinctoris's own masses and motets),[10] but then Busnoys was hardly a man to shy away from mensural contrivance. Nor would the juxtaposition do much justice to Tinctoris and his teachings. The terms on which he discussed mensural theory may not have been popular, but within those terms he managed to convey a vision of mensural theory that commands respect for its intellectual profundity and integrity.[11] The modern tendency to sympathize with great composers more than with theorists should not lead us to overlook a very obvious (if even today perhaps unpopular) historical fact: that mensural theory, as codified by Tinctoris, is arguably among the great intellectual achievements of the late Middle Ages.[12] We might well be doing Busnoys's musicianship an injustice by setting it up in a perceived opposition with this.

Another juxtaposition might be the medieval one between *musicus* and *cantor*, crucially divided by the 'magna differentia' in literacy, learning, and thorough training in the liberal arts (*D* s.v. Cantor, Musicus). This, as we have seen, is the only internal division Tinctoris was prepared to acknowledge within the art of music. Since no one could be *musicus* without a degree in the liberal arts, there was (if nothing else) a social dimension to his refusal to dignify unlearned *cantores* with a world of their own. Their compositions might be widely distributed throughout the Christian world (more widely, in many cases, than his own), yet no amount of international success ought to validate errors committed demonstrably in ignorance. This was true of music no less than of, say, humanist Latin. Commenting on the widespread use of *prolatio maior* augmentation, Tinctoris hinted at this very parallel (*P* iii. 3. 7–8):

> Indeed I am not surprised that Regis, Caron, Boubert, Faugues, Courbet, and many others have imitated Domarto in this error (as I have seen in their works), for I have been told that they are totally unlearned (*minime litterati*). And who can attain the truth not only of this but of any liberal science without learning?

Yet it is at precisely this point that the theorist acknowledged the common ground between himself and Busnoys, emphasizing the importance for men of their intellectual rank not to stoop to the level of the unlearned (9–10):

> But that Ockeghem and Busnoys, men known to be sound Latinists, should stoop to their level in their masses *De plus en plus* and *L'homme armé* has aroused no small astonishment in our breast. What is more remarkable than that the sighted should enter upon the trackless (wastes) of blindness . . .

[10] e.g. *P* iii. 3. 10 and 5. 11–12.

[11] I have elaborated this point in two recent articles, and hope to expand it in others. See Rob C. Wegman, 'What is *Acceleratio mensurae*?', *ML* 73 (1992), 515–24, and 'Sense and Sensibility in Late-Medieval Music: Reflections on Aesthetics and Authenticity', *Early Music*, 23 (1995), 299–312.

[12] See also Rob C. Wegman, 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus* and the Early History of the Four-Voice Mass in the Fifteenth Century', *EMH* 10 (1990), 235–303 at 267–70.

Tinctoris judged Busnoys by a different standard, and this is a standard to which the composer himself aspired. By 1473 he had obtained the degree of master of arts (it is not known at which university),[13] and this means he had acquired all the knowledge and skills of disputation to answer Tinctoris's points, had he wanted to. And although he might not have relished public debate as much as his critic, there can be little doubt that matters of mensural theory did not leave him indifferent. Tinctoris may strike us occasionally as a cut-and-dried pedant, yet ironically, Busnoys was second only to him in ostentatiously foregrounding musical learning in his sacred works. And Tinctoris's style may overstate the intellectual dimension to the notational matters at issue, yet the composer applied the disputed practices self-consciously, in several cases uniquely, and seems to have persisted in them well after the dissemination of *Proportionale musices* (see below). If he was not making a theoretical point, what was he trying to communicate?

The Case Against Busnoys: Notational 'Errors'

If direct juxtapositions with Tinctoris yield no easy answers, examination of Busnoys's music and mensural profile only complicates the matter further. I shall focus in the first instance on notational details in his motets, as transmitted in the manuscript Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek 5557. The reasons are twofold. First, the Brussels choirbook was copied and used at the Burgundian court throughout the period of Busnoys's employment,[14] and almost certainly contains direct transcripts from his autographs, if not copies in his own hand.[15] One of the Brussels scribes, as has often been pointed out, took an exclusive interest in copying Busnoys settings, did so with unusual care, and assumed the authority to make subsequent revisions or emendations in the music he had written down. Although one piece, the Magnificat, was not copied by him, it was he who supplied the attribution, and it must have been he, too, who emended a passage in the 'Deposuit potentes'. The scribes's notes look somewhat like stylized candle flames, with slightly curved top and bottom corners, and it is notes exactly like these that were

[13] Paula Higgins, '*In hydraulis* Revisited: New Light on the Career of Antoine Busnois', *JAMS* 39 (1986), 36–86 at 51 n. 67.

[14] Most of the Busnoys settings in this manuscript are found in the eighth gathering, whose paper dates 1476–80 (Rob C. Wegman, 'New Data Concerning the Origins and Chronology of Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Manuscript 5557', *TVNM* 36 (1986), 5–25). Independent evidence that the choirbook was being used as late as 1479 is supplied by the French verse scribbled on the otherwise empty fo. 2^{r} (*Choirbook of the Burgundian Court Chapel: Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek MS 5557*, with an introduction by Rob C. Wegman (Peer, 1989), 7 and fo. 2^{r}): 'Dis au Roy des Fauceurs qui n'use | Du treu d'un bonnier de Blangy | Il trouvera sans point de ruse | Quant la ses frans archiers perdy.' The 'Roy des Fauceurs' must be Louis XI, whose so-called 'faucheurs' pillaged the Hainaut countryside in 1477–8. The verse must have been written after the summer of 1479, since it refers to the battle of Blangy between Maximilian of Austria and Louis XI (7 Aug. 1479), which was lost by the latter's troops due to the lack of courage of his *francs archers* (M. Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Histoire de Flandre* (Bruges, 1874), iv. 172–5). Busnoys was in Maximilian's retinue at the time of the battle (Higgins, '*In hydraulis* Revisited', 64).

[15] Cf. Wolfgang Stephan, *Die burgundisch-niederländische Motette zur Zeit Ockeghems* (Heidelberger Studien zur Musikwissenschaft, 6; Kassel, 1937), 89, and Flynn Warmington's unpublished paper ' "A Very

written in the emendation, evidently over an erasure.[16] It would appear from this that the scribe's interest in works by Busnoys did not stop with his own copies: he intervened in another copy, attributing and possibly emending it. The second reason is that the Busnoys settings in Brussels are fully consistent notationally, even where they are in error, at least by Tinctoris's standards. This suggests a distinct mensural profile—which scribes elsewhere generally transmitted much less consistently, and sometimes even obliterated altogether (see below).

Ex. 8.1 gives a sample of usages that to my knowledge are unique to the sacred music of Busnoys. All these usages contradict not just the rules of mensural theory (particularly those of imperfection, coloration, and division) but, more seriously, the fundamental logic that holds the system together. The usages are identified by number, and would have been regarded as illogical for the following respective reasons:

1. The breve is to be counted with the preceding longa (imperfection *a parte post*), if only because it is followed by a group of notes that together make up a perfect longa. The dot of 'division' consequently separates what cannot be counted together in the first place. (For the principle that a dot of division can only separate what would otherwise be counted together, see *I* 3. 39 and *SPM* 2. 2.)

2. The coloured maxima is equivalent to two imperfect longas; the subsequent rest (or note) can only be counted together with the maxima, to form one ternary unit, and consequently the dot of 'division' cannot divide it from what follows.

3. The maxima in O2 is equivalent to two perfect longas. (This follows from the fact that coloured maximas elsewhere in this voice-part are equivalent to two imperfect longas; see above, under 2.) Since its value is binary, the maxima cannot be imperfected by a longa—even though both of its perfect longas can be imperfected by breves, of course. Hence the longa rest cannot imperfect it, even with the (redundant) dot of division. The intended rhythm should have been obtained by coloration.

4. Since imperfection *a parte post* takes precedence over imperfection *a parte ante*, the breve rest is to be counted together with the preceding maxima rather than the following longa, and consequently cannot be divided from the latter through the insertion of a dot.

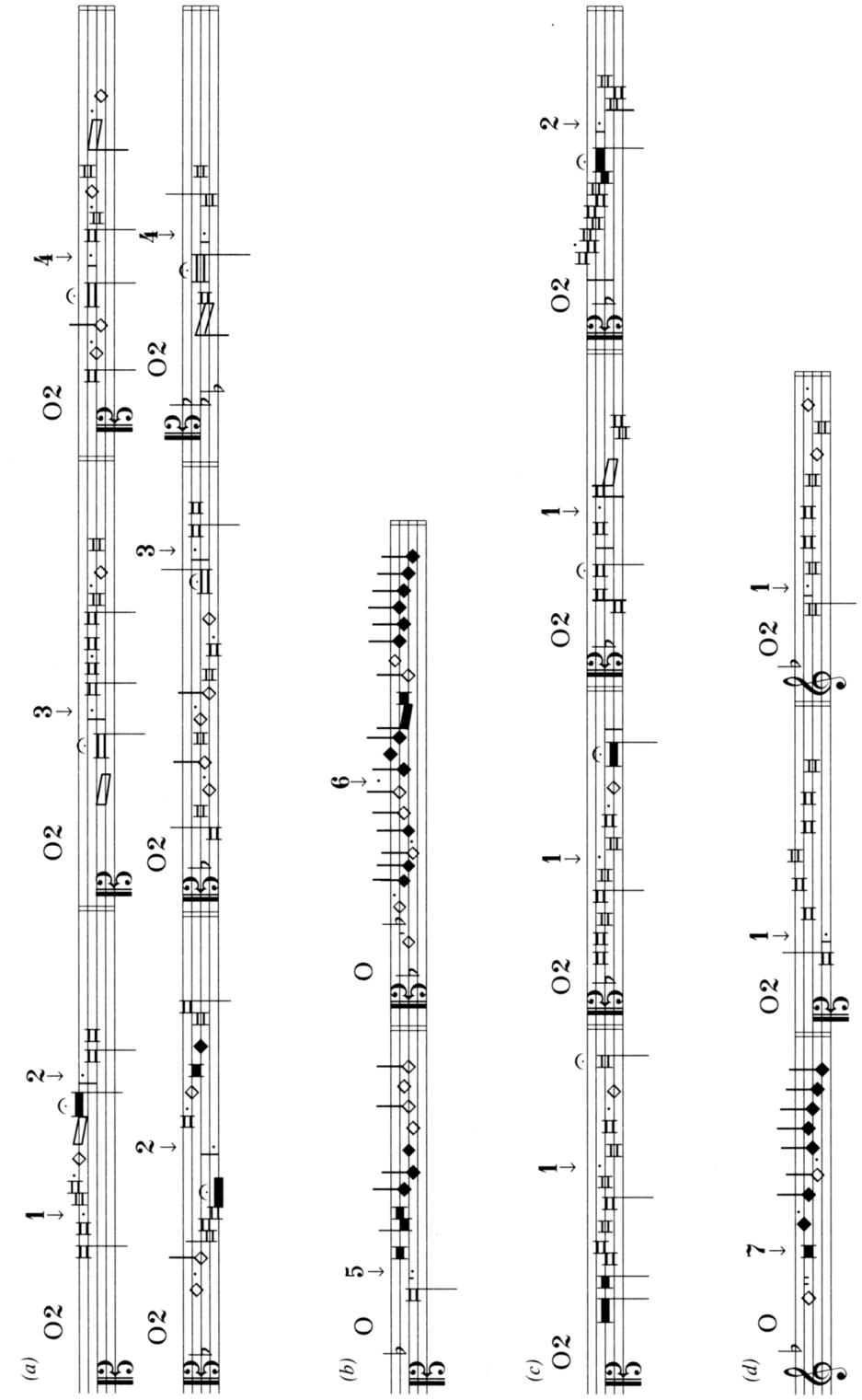
5. The semibreve rest is followed by a ternary unit (three perfect breves), and consequently cannot be divided from that unit.

6. Dot of 'division' between notes that cannot be counted together in the first place.

7. Redundant coloration.

Fine Troup of Bastards"? Provenance, Date, and Busnois's Role in Brussels 5557', read at the national meeting of the American Musicological Society, Philadelphia, 1984.

[16] Brussels 5557, fo. 72^{r}, about two-thirds into the second stave of the tenor. The emendation is clearly visible in the facsimile edition (*Choirbook of the Burgundian Court Chapel*).

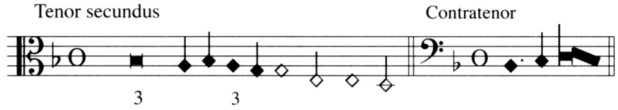


Ex. 8.1. Mensural usages unique to Busnoys's Latin-texted music: (*a*) *Alleluia verbum caro factum est*; (*b*) *Regina caeli* I; (c) *Noel noel*; (*d*) *Victimae paschali laudes*

All these errors are quite basic: Busnoys demands imperfection of notes that cannot be imperfected, uses a dot of division in passages where there is nothing to divide, and uses coloration to effect a rhythm which is already there. In his defence one might perhaps suggest that he was conscious of potential misreadings on the part of his colleagues. Yet is seems improbable that the correct alternatives would have posed any problems that could not have been resolved at the first rehearsal. The Burgundian singers were thoroughly trained professionals, who were expected to cope with complex proportional signs such as ☽ in *Anima mea* (fo. 83^{v}) and ⌽ in *Victimae paschali laudes* (fos. 85^{v}–86^{r}). Nor is it likely that the over-notation might bespeak the involvement of inexperienced choirboys in an original performance context, prior to Busnoys's appointment at the Burgundian court (for instance, during this choirmastership at Poitiers, 1465–6), for the 'errors' are found in bass and tenor parts just as much as in the discantus.

Tinctoris did not censure Busnoys for these practices at the points where he might have done so (*SPM* 15. 2–3; *I* 2. 20). Yet he did criticize him in the *Proportionale musices* for a very similar type of over-notation: it is the redundant '3' under passages in *sesquialtera* coloration (*P* iii. 4. 11–12; my italics):[17]

> Indeed, from all these three articles [concerning the indication of proportions], Busnoys *alone* dissents, for again and again he indicates his hemiolas, even though designated by the filling-in of notes, by placing underneath of the figure 3, as can be observed in this motet of his:



> In this it is considered *by all* as superfluous, since the filling-in of notes suffices; inadequate, since even if it needed a sign in figures one figure would not be enough; and irregular, since what must be put at the beginning he puts underneath.

Emphasizing (twice) that the practice was unique to Busnoys, Tinctoris raised three objections: first, that coloration by itself already signifies 3/2 proportion, so that no figure is needed in addition ('superfluous'); second, that the proportional sign is incomplete, and should really consist of two figures ('inadequate'); and third, that the figure is placed *beneath* the passage rather than before it ('irregular'). From Tinctoris's point of view it is indeed difficult to see what alternative reading Busnoys was trying to prevent, for even without the '3' it is impossible to execute the coloured passage in any other way than he in fact spelt it out. *With* the '3', on the other hand, singers might well have been confused into thinking that *sesquialtera* should be applied twice over, leading to the cumulative propor-

[17] 'Ab his vero tribus pariter articulis Busnois unicus dissidet qui suas emyolias per impletionem notarum designatas suppositione istius cyphrae 3 iterum et iterum signat, ut patet in isto moteto suo animadvertere. [Example.] In quo superfluus, quia pro signo sufficit notarum impletio, diminutus, quia licet signo cyphrali indigeret unica cyphra non satisfaceret, et inordinatus, quia quod praeponendum est supponit, cunctis esse perhibetur.'

tion 9/4 (under which the passage would have taken up two-thirds of a perfect *tempus*, rather than a full *tempus*).

It may be this very possibility of confusion that motivated scribes elsewhere in Europe to omit the '3', or even renotate such passages altogether. Where we have more than one source for a sacred setting by Busnoys, the survival of a '3' in one manuscript almost invariably corresponds to omissions and renotations in its concordances.[18] This is true also of the unnamed motet from which Tinctoris cites his musical example. This work can be identified as the anonymous *Gaude caelestis Domina*, surviving uniquely in Cappella Sistina 15 (where it immediately follows Busnoys's securely attributed *Anima mea*).[19] Although the music for the contratenor and bass in bars 71–2 is clearly identical to that cited in the *Proportionale* (see the edition below, App.), neither of the figures '3' has been copied; moreover, the rhythm has been partly renotated.

The independent renotation of Busnoys's 'error' in different lines of transmission for several of his works places the Busnoys–Tinctoris issue in a different perspective. It is true that one might attribute the renotations to the influence of Tinctoris—or in his wake perhaps that of Gaffurius.[20] Yet this cannot explain why even the 'errors' listed in Ex. 8.1 (which Tinctoris had not criticized specifically in Busnoys) were renotated as well: in the only case where we have a concordance (Cappella Sistina 42, for *Regina caeli* I), the redundant dots of division turn out not to have been copied.[21] And so it would seem that Tinctoris, rather than being merely petty and fault-finding (and in an isolated position for these very reasons), voiced a more general sense of puzzlement at Busnoys's notational habits. 'Busnoys *alone* dissents . . . considered *by all* as superfluous': what could explain the composer's single-minded persistence in these and other confusing habits?

Historical Backgrounds

It is important to note that Busnoys's figures '3' always appear in passages where coloration is used in a very specific rhythmic pattern. Basically that pattern can be

[18] The Busnoys '3' is otherwise documented in *Victimae paschali laudes* (Brussels 5557, fo. 85^{r-v}), *Regina caeli I* (ibid., fo. 86^{v}), *Magnificat octavi toni* ('Esurientes'), and *Missa L'homme armé* (Sanctus, bar 30 and Osanna, bar 27). Source variants exist for each of these passages except the one in *Victimae paschali laudes*, which is transmitted uniquely in Brussels 5557.

[19] Fos. 242^{v}–245^{r} (edition below, App.). See Rob C. Wegman, Communication to the Editor, *ML* 71 (1990), 633–5 at 635. At the time I still assumed (on the basis of Albert Seay's edition of Tinctoris's theoretical works) that the motet cited in *P* was entitled *Animadvertere*. I am grateful to Leofranc Holford-Strevens for pointing out to me that the word 'animadvertere' was part of Tinctoris's Latin, and that he mentions no title at all. There is thus no longer any obstacle to accepting *Gaude caelestis Domina* as a work by Busnoys. For brief discussions of the motet, see Stephan, *Die burgundisch-niederländische Motette*, 18–20, and below.

[20] Franchinus Gaffurius, *Practica musicae*, trans. Clement A. Miller (MSD 20; American Institute of Musicology, 1968), 178.

[21] I am grateful to Bonnie Blackburn for verifying this for me in her microfilm of Cappella Sistina 42.

seen as a succession of two hemiolas on different levels, the first consisting of three against two semibreves, and the second of three against two minims.[22] One might assume that Busnoys, in using the figures '3', wished to clarify the distinction between these two levels. Yet it should once again be stressed that this clarification would not help the rhythmic interpretation in any way. Once one recognizes this highly distinctive pattern (it virtually leaps out from the surrounding white notation), it can be executed almost routinely, even at a first rehearsal. Rather than communicating the 'proper' reading, it seems, Busnoys must have felt that this was the right way to notate the pattern—the way, one is tempted to suggest, he had been brought up to do.

This brings us back to a possibility mentioned earlier: that of justification by precedent. In English music of the mid-fifteenth century we often find coloured rhythmic patterns of the very same type as described here, particularly in the cadential formula that has become known as the 'English Figure'.[23] Charles Hamm has documented the use of the redundant '3' in two English settings from the 1430s or 1440s, and, as it happens, in precisely this cadential formula.[24] Although the 'English Figure'—as the name suggests—is exceedingly rare in the Continental repertory, we do find it occasionally in Busnoys's music.[25]

Against this historical background we are forced to consider an entirely different possibility: that Busnoys was perhaps reared in an older mensural tradition to which he remained faithful, and which he was at pains to acknowledge, throughout his career. Perhaps we could compare this to the way Giovanni Spataro, to the end of his life, remained loyal to the somewhat eccentric precepts of his teacher Ramos de Pareja.[26] For Spataro this seems to have been a personal as much as a theoretical issue: when forced to defend 'mio preceptore', in 1529, he did not hesitate to call Tinctoris 'a fool [who] thought he knew a lot more than

[22] As illustrated in Rob C. Wegman, 'Another Mass by Busnoys?', *ML* 71 (1990), 1–19 at 4 n. 15.

[23] See Hamm, *A Chronology*, 52–4 and 92–4; Robert J. Snow, 'The Manuscript Strahov D. G. IV. 47' (Ph. D. diss., University of Illinois, Urbana, 1968), 92.

[24] *A Chronology*, 52–3. Hamm argues that neither the '3' nor the coloration is redundant: 'the former operates at the minim level, giving three minims in the time of two; the latter is semibreve coloration, putting three [semibreves] in place of two' (ibid. 52). This cannot be correct, however: the coloration fills one tempus in ϕ, and should, if Hamm's interpretation were correct, contain four and a half semibreves in place of three, the proportion being 3 : 2. If the notated '3' represents an additional *sesquialtera* proportion on the minim level, as Hamm suggests, each of the four and a half semibreves should contain three minims, thus giving a total of thirteen and a half minims. However, in transcription it turns out that the intended number of minims was nine, and hence that *sesquialtera* was to be applied only once. The '3' is quite definitely redundant.

[25] For instance, in the *Missa L'homme armé*, Qui tollis, *tempora* 26–7, in the edition by Laurence Feininger (Monumenta Polyphoniae Liturgicae Sanctae Ecclesiae Romanae, I/i/2; Rome, 1948), where one can observe that the cadential formula was fully coloured in the English manner. This is the reading of Cappella Sistina 14 (partly renotated in its descendant, Cappella Sistina 63, but identical in Verona 759, which is extremely close to Cappella Sistina 14), and may well have been supplied originally with the figure '3' underneath. The formula has been fully renotated in Barcelona 454, and has been changed melodically, in different ways, in Chigi and SM 26—illustrating some of the vicissitudes that Busnoys's notational habits underwent in transmission.

[26] Blackburn, Lowinsky, and Miller (eds.), *A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians*, 52–3, 55, and 1009–11.

he did'.[27] Yet even in the 1470s, as we have seen, there were singers who were prepared to make the theorist eat his words.

Busnoys's single-minded adherence to notational practices that were edited out of his music almost everywhere else, and were patently erroneous by the standards of Tinctoris, does seem to have such an element of loyalty to it.[28] Although I have not been able to discover precedents for the 'erroneous' practices listed in Ex. 8.1 (a more contemporary example will be discussed below), any composer of the previous generation who employed them consistently in exactly this way must have been close enough to Busnoys to have shaped his mensural outlook.

At the same time the hypothesis of a single formative influence, an influential teacher, does not satisfy. For Busnoys's mensural profile really is a complex of many diverse historical strands—one of which, as we have seen, can be traced back ultimately to English sacred music of the mid-fifteenth century. To unravel and trace back the other strands is a task that could not possibly be accomplished in a short contribution such as this. Even in the small *œuvre* that has survived we find a range of highly unusual mensuration signs, most of them 'erroneous', according to Tinctoris: ↄ, ϕ, ¢, C3, ¢3, ϕ, O with perfect minor *modus*.[29] Several of these signs can be found in earlier repertory, and may go back to the years of Busnoys's training; others, however, could easily have been initiated by him.

One way forward might be to identify, however tentatively, different strata in the composer's mensural profile: primary and secondary. It is clear in several cases that Busnoys introduced mensural complexities almost for the occasion, creating intertextual meanings similar to those of canonic procedures and melodic quotations.[30] For instance, the sign C3 in the Tu solus of *Missa L'homme armé* is evidently an allusion to the pre-mass origins of the *L'homme armé* tune. Not only does the sign appear in the anonymous combinative song *Il sera pour vous/L'homme armé*, but it was in fact widely employed in other such songs in the 1440s and early 1450s, and the *L'homme armé* tune itself (notated in C3 in Naples VI E 40) is a typical *chanson rustique* of the 'chanson à refrain' form, such as found its way into numerous combinative songs.[31] Similarly, the curious juxtaposition

[27] Ibid. 406 and 411.

[28] I have made a similar assumption about Jacob Obrecht, who seems to have followed Busnoys in combining coloration with the figure '3' (*Born for the Muses*, 100 n. 13).

[29] See the survey in Wegman, 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*, 263.

[30] On intertextuality in the music of Busnoys and his contemporaries see the seminal comments in Paula Marie Higgins, 'Antoine Busnois and Musical Culture in Late Fifteenth-Century France and Burgundy', (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1987), 144–60.

[31] Maria Rika Maniates (ed.), *The Combinative Chanson: An Anthology* (Recent Researches in the Music of the Renaissance, 77; Madison, 1989); Rob C. Wegman, review of this edition, in *ML* 72 (1991), 510–13; Wegman, 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 256 n. 45 and 258 n. 52. Further on the *chanson rustique* background of *L'homme armé*, see Reinhard Strohm, *The rise of European Music, 1380–1500* (Cambridge, 1993), 465–6; for another combinative song that quotes *L'homme armé*, see *P* iii. 4. 7. By all the criteria elaborated in my review of Maniates's edition, *Il sera pour vous/L'homme armé* is a typical combinative song of the 1440s or early 1450s (Group A). The original three-part version is anonymous; the later

of ☽ and ☾, in the Confiteor of the same mass, was surely inspired by the 'Genitum non factum' of Dufay's *Missa L'homme armé*, where the very same signatures appear in the very same relationship, albeit without strokes.[32] In the *L'homme armé* mass, then, these mensural allusions seem to be part of a richer intertextual tissue which also includes, for instance, an inversion canon in the bass of the Agnus Dei—apparently a combined allusion to Dufay's retrograde canon and Ockeghem's transposition to the bass in the respective Agnus Deis of their settings.[33] Within Busnoys's total sacred *œuvre* all three signs, C3 (with perfect prolation), ☽, and ☾, are unique to the *L'homme armé* mass, and although they may be revealing of the composer's sense of tradition in the *L'homme armé* history, they are clearly secondary in terms of his mensural backgrounds.

Primary must be those mensural habits that are used consistently throughout Busnoys's sacred *œuvre*. This includes the various practices listed in Ex. 8.1, the redundant figure '3' (with its peculiar rhythmic pattern), but also, of course, the signature O2.[34] Despite the criticisms of Tinctoris (*P* iii. 5. 8–10), Busnoys employed this sign in a wide range of liturgical genres, involving nearly the whole gamut of compositional styles and techniques: the two masses, a devotional tenor motet (*Anthoni usque limina*), a sequence (*Victimae paschali laudes*), a Canticle (Magnificat), and a short festive acclamation (*Noel noel*). An additional reason for assuming that the composer's fondness for O2 may go back to the years of his training is that most of the 'errors' in Ex. 8.1 occur in this mensuration, and operate precisely on its distinguishing mensural level of perfect minor *modus*. O2 being Busnoys's virtual trademark, it begins to seem increasingly doubtful that he would have considered any of the practices listed in Ex. 8.1 as erroneous. For him they must simply have represented the right way to do it (even if no one else did), justified by a precedent somewhere in his past, which we have not as yet discovered.

four-part arrangement is attributed to 'Borton', who has been thought to be either Robert Morton or Antoine Busnoys, and was recently identified tentatively with Pieter Bordon (Wegman, *Born for the Muses*, 71–2). For earlier discussions on the interpretation and significance of C3, see Richard Taruskin, 'Antoine Busnoys and the *L'Homme armé* Tradition', 286–9, and Rob C. Wegman and Richard Taruskin, Communications, *JAMS* 42 (1989), 437–43 and 443–52. The sign was condemned by Tinctoris in Domarto (*P* iii. 5. 13–19; see also the discussion in Wegman, 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 255–6).

[32] Wegman, Communication *JAMS* 42, 441–3. Richard Taruskin has argued that these two passages, which involve two exceedingly rare signatures in identical superimpositions in two northern French *L'homme armé* masses from the 1460s, were totally independently and differently conceived (ibid. 451–2). Reversed signs of imperfect *tempus* (whether with major or minor prolation) were condemned by Tinctoris as being 'so frivolous, so erroneous, and so far from all appearance of reason' that he chose not to dignify them with musical examples from the works of 'those whom I fear to name [who] do not blush to use them' (*P* iii. 2. 31–2). Busnoys was among these composers: see Wegman, 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 263, table 4, nos. 4, 17, and 18.

[33] Again the subject of considerable debate; see Taruskin, 'Antoine Busnoys and the *L'Homme armé* Tradition', 263; David Fallows and Richard Taruskin, Communications, *JAMS* 40 (1987), 146–8 and 148–53 (at 152–3); D. Fallows, *Dufay* (rev. edn., London, 1987), 310–11.

[34] Taruskin first drew attention to Busnoys's special use of this sign; 'Antoine Busnoys and the *L'Homme armé* Tradition', at 284–5.

One figure looms larger than any other composer in what we know of Busnoys's mensural and compositional backgrounds: Petrus de Domarto. Elsewhere I have drawn attention to a range of uniquely close parallels between the latter's famous *Missa Spiritus almus* and Busnoys's *Missa O crux lignum*. Yet I held back from speculating on possible personal encounters,[35] emphasizing instead the outlines of a more general picture: that of the fermenting musical climate in the Low Countries in the years around 1450.[36] However, my initial assumption, that Busnoys belatedly underwent the influence of that climate at some point after the mid-1460s, and became attracted to its distinguishing mensural and compositional practices mainly for their intrinsic interest,[37] now appears to me over-cautious. This is not just because of the apparent element of loyalty to which I referred above—although that element is placed in even sharper relief by the fact that Busnoys's mensural/compositional profile bears little trace of any influence on the part of Ockeghem (despite the five years he spent in the vicinity of that composer, at Tours in 1460–5), or indeed that of any other Northern musician active in the 1460s.[38] Crucial is also Paula Higgins's observation that Busnoys must have been an accomplished poet and composer by the mid-to-late 1450s, pushing back the years of his training to the early part of that decade at the latest.[39] Since all of Busnoys's prebends were situated in the south-western Low Countries, and his name moreover appears to be of Artois origin,[40] there is a strong circumstantial case for assuming that he originated from this area, and spent his formative years there.

The speculation that Busnoys might have been a pupil of Domarto in the early 1450s is exactly that: a speculation—albeit an attractive one. On musical grounds there is much to be said for it, yet in the absence of firm documentary evidence[41] we shall gain more from detailing the general musical picture of the southern Netherlands in the early 1450s, a picture in which both men can now be situated with some confidence. As for Petrus de Domarto, there is a highly suggestive piece

[35] 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 262–72.

[36] Ibid. 300–2.

[37] Ibid. 264–72.

[38] Ibid. 264.

[39] See particularly Paula Higgins, 'Parisian Nobles, a Scottish Princess, and the Woman's Voice in Late Medieval Song', *EMH* 10 (1991), 145–200 at 188–90. The text of a rondeau 'Lequel vous plairoit mieulx trouver' is attributed to Busnoys in the mid-1450s poetry collection Paris 9223; see Higgins, 'Antoine Busnois and Musical Culture', 276–85. David Fallows, in his contribution elsewhere in this volume (above, pp. 26–30), suggests on the basis of this and other evidence pertaining to Paris 9223 that Busnoys might have been associated with the court of Brittany in the 1450s. In the light of comments made to me privately by Paula Higgins, I accept that Busnoys may have been much older than I previously thought (*Born for the Muses*, 64 n. 39, and 311). Pamela Starr suggests a birthdate between 1436 and 1439 ('Rome as the Centre of the Universe: Papal Grace and Musical Patronage', *EMH* 11 (1992), 223–62 at 251). It should be noted, however, that singers could be professionally active already in their late teenage years (as in the case of Pieter Bordon; see Wegman, *Born for the Muses*, 70–1), and that there is no problem in assuming exceptional precocity in Busnoys.

[40] Wegman, *Born for the Muses*, 65 n. 42; Higgins, '*In hydraulis* Revisited', 71 n. 109.

[41] The only written evidence that might suggest a teacher–pupil relationship is provided by Tinctoris: of the six passages in which he singles out Domarto for criticism, four mention Busnoys as well, either in one breath (*C* ii. 29. 3), or as having imitated or followed the older master (*I* 3. 56; *P* iii. 3. 7–9 and 5. 9).

to be added to the puzzle: Alejandro Planchart has recently discovered a new document mentioning this shadowy figure, and with characteristic generosity he has allowed me to publish it here. On 20 October 1451 the chapter of Cambrai Cathedral decided that their canon Guillaume Turpin should go to Tournai in connection with the vacancy of master of the choirboys. His specific task was to persuade a Paulus Iuvenis to accept the office, or alternatively to negotiate with Petrus de Domarto, 'who is also said to be a good musician':[42]

> Vadat dominus Guillermus Turpin apud Tornacum . . . ad loquendum de uno magistro puerorum, et specialiter si possit faciat quod dominus Paulus Iuvenis acceptet officium, quia famatur bonus musicus et honestus, alioquin loquatur cum Petro de Domarto, qui etiam famatus est bonus musicus.

It emerges from this document that Domarto, two years after his brief employment at Antwerp,[43] was active in Tournai. He is mentioned neither as priest nor as master of arts (as was also the case at Antwerp), yet his reputation nevertheless made him a good second choice for a teaching post at a major musical establishment. What makes the document particularly interesting, of course, is the fact that Dufay was at this time a resident canon of Cambrai cathedral, and actively involved in the affairs of the chapter: surely the 'famatus est' must reflect his considered testimony.[44] Since the care and training of the Cambrai choirboys was at stake, Domarto could hardly have been considered for this responsible position unless he was a teacher of proven ability.[45] And as such we find him, then, in the very area where Busnoys's years of training may be plausibly located—the counties of Flanders, Artois, and Hainaut—in the very years during which his musicianship must have been formed.

It is also in this area, incidentally, that we begin to find a plausible historical background for the rhythmic pattern in which Busnoys combined coloration with '3' in the English manner. Scarcely 20 km. west of Tournai was Lille, at whose church of St Peter the master of the choirboys in 1450–1 and 1460–1 was a Simon de Vromont. Reinhard Strohm has persuasively identified this man with

[42] Cambrai, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 1059, fo. 1^{v}. I am most grateful to Professor Planchart for sharing his discovery with me; he informs me that Iuvenis (probably De Jonghe or Le Jeune in the vernacular) was hired for the position five days later, on 25 Oct. 1452 (ibid., fo. 2^{v}).

[43] Wegman, 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 235–7.

[44] Craig Wright, 'Dufay at Cambrai: Discoveries and Revisions', *JAMS* 28 (1975), 175–229 at 188–9. Interestingly, Dufay and Domarto are the first known composers to have used the sign O2 for perfect minor *modus*, probably in the 1440s. See Wegman, 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 258 n. 52, and Anna Maria Busse Berger, *Mensuration and Proportion Signs: Origins and Evolution* (Oxford, 1993), 22–3.

[45] The *Missa Spiritus almus* could well have existed by this time, adding to his reputation (Wegman, 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 276–94). The duties of the master of the choirboys were defined in a chapter decision of 22 Sept. 1458, and included the teaching of liturgy, plainchant, proper behaviour, and Latin conversation, as well as supervision of the boys' playing, and responsibility for their sustenance and their language. See André Pirro, 'Obrecht à Cambrai', *TVNM* 12 (1927), 78–80 at 78–9, and also, more recently, Alejandro Enrique Planchart, 'The Early Career of Guillaume Du Fay', *JAMS* 46 (1993), 341–68 at 350–1.

the 'Simon of Lille' whose *Missa O admirabile commercium*, composed probably in the 1450s, survives in Trent 88.[46] Writing in a style that is clearly indebted to the anonymous English *Missa Caput*, Simon repeatedly uses the 'English Figure' in cadences, and the surviving notation is almost invariably in full coloration—albeit without figures '3'.[47]

This context is all the more plausible since freshly imported English music (particularly the anonymous *Missa Caput*) demonstrably had a major impact on composers working in the south-western Low Countries in the years around 1450. There is the famous case of Ockeghem's 'remake' of the *Caput* mass, for instance. His setting not only parallels Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus* in style and compositional approach,[48] but it is among the exceedingly rare Continental works which (like Simon's *Missa O admirabile commercium*) employ the 'English Figure' in coloration.[49] More importantly—and this is where the web of musical interrelationships is pulled irresistibly tight—Ockeghem employs the almost exclusively English practice of telescoped text setting in the Credo.[50] This practice is exceptional for Continental mass music, but significantly, the only other known cycles to have telescoped Credo texts happen to be by composers who, like Ockeghem, were active at Antwerp in the 1440s: Petrus de Domarto in his three-part *Missa Quinti toni irregularis* (a cycle strikingly reminiscent of Leonel Power's mass settings),[51] and Jean Pulloys in his untitled three-part mass (a work so English in style and approach as to have had its ascription to Pulloys called into question).[52]

We should probably be careful not to overemphasize the Antwerp angle in the total picture,[53] if only because many musical centres in this region are still seriously understudied: Ghent, Courtrai, Thérouanne, Douai, Lille, Tournai, Arras, even Cambrai. What we can say, almost categorically, is that singers

[46] Fos. 304^{v}–311^{r}; no published edition. See Wegman, 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 301–2. Strohm made the suggestion in a paper read at the February meeting of the Royal Musical Association, London, 4 Feb. 1989.

[47] References are to *tempora*: Patrem, top voice, 35 and 79 (both in full coloration); Et incarnatus, 135–6 (partially renotated); Benedictus–Osanna, 88–9 and 107–8 (both in full coloration).

[48] Wegman, 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 269–70 and 289–94.

[49] Credo, bar 34; see Johannes Ockeghem, *Collected Works*, ed. Dragan Plamenac (American Musicological Society, 1959–93), ii. 37–58. Other English-derived features which this mass shares with the settings by Domarto and Simon of Lille are simultaneous rests in duos (Gloria, bar 10, Credo, bar 11, Sanctus, bar 110; cf. Wegman, 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 286–7, and *Missa O admirabile commercium*, Agnus Dei II, *tempus* 15), and extensive duos involving a scaffold tenor (Pleni and Agnus Dei II; cf. Wegman, ibid. 283, and *Missa O admirabile commercium*, Agnus Dei II).

[50] Credo, bars 144–208. The most extensive discussion of telescoping in English mass music is in Gareth R. K. Curtis, 'The English Masses of Brussels, Bibliothèque royale, MS. 5557' (Ph.D. diss., University of Manchester, 1979), i. 181–213. The single surviving copy for Simon's *Missa O admirabile commercium* supplies no text for the lower parts of the Credo beyond brief incipits, and consequently it cannot be ascertained whether the text in this movement might have been telescoped as well.

[51] Credo, bars 31–44; see David M. Kidger, 'The Music and Biography of Petrus de Domarto' (M.A. thesis, University of California at Santa Barbara, 1990), 197–8 and 349.

[52] Gareth R. K. Curtis, 'Jean Pullois and the Cyclic Mass—Or a Case of Mistaken Identity?', *ML* 62 (1981), 41–59 at 51–2.

[53] See also my cautionary remarks in 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 293–4.

migrated freely within this area, and that their employment was rarely permanent enough for us to localize musical trends in the way that, for instance, art historians can postulate workshops and local 'schools'. If this was true of Domarto, as we have seen (Antwerp 1449, Tournai 1451), then clearly it would be pointless to speculate that Busnoys might have been trained by him directly for any length of time, in any particular place. Perhaps it is enough for us to be reasonably sure that he was trained somewhere in this region, as a young and impressionable aspiring musician, and that the sheer intensity of musical traffic made influence of some kind unavoidable. That in itself may be more than we could reasonably have hoped for: it means that Busnoys spent his formative years in one of the most exciting phases of fifteenth-century music history—singing, copying, and studying recent English music along with the latest Continental responses by Ockeghem, Domarto, Dufay, and Pulloys.

Tinctoris came from broadly this region as well, and he was of roughly the same age as Busnoys. Yet whatever musical influences he had undergone during his adolescence, in the end Tinctoris was to develop an adherence to the more narrowly scientific principles of 'reason' and 'truth', probably during his university years.[54] That makes him something of a special case (paralleled only, perhaps, by that of Dufay),[55] and we can now see that his first public attempts to reassert the traditions of Vitry and de Muris, in the early 1470s, came too late, and represented too 'learned' a voice, to make a significant impact on the ingrained habits of his contemporaries, even of the internationally famous Busnoys—himself by now a man of learning.

Yet in many ways Busnoys was a special case, too. As we have observed, there is something uniquely persistent and single-minded about the way he perpetuated mensural and compositional practices that many scribes elsewhere preferred to renotate, resolve, or remove. If his musicianship was formed in the years and the region that saw the creation of Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus* and Ockeghem's *Missa Caput*, then this musical climate seems to have had a far more lasting impact on him than on anyone else—including Ockeghem, whose later masses and motets were to move in a different direction entirely. And even if we speculate that Busnoys, after returning to the North in late 1466, might have consciously reidentified with native traditions abandoned during his years with Ockeghem in France, that single-mindedness would only appear more striking, for it made him, in effect, the tradition's chief representative. In the end one is led

[54] In the years around 1460; see Ronald Woodley, 'Iohannes Tinctoris: A Review of the Documentary Biographical Evidence', *JAMS* 34 (1981), 217–48 at 226–9 and 242 (from which it appears that Tinctoris had obtained the degree of master of arts by 1462).

[55] I have emphasized in '*Miserere supplicanti Dufay*: The Creation and Transmission of Guillaume Dufay's *Missa Ave regina celorum*', *Journal of Musicology*, 13 (1995), 18–54 at 29 n. 22, that Dufay, in his later years, increasingly came to repent the mensural sins of his youth, aspiring to a notational 'correctness' that in many ways parallels the attitude of Tinctoris. It may be significant that Tinctoris came to work or study with Dufay for four months in 1460 (Planchart, 'The Early Career of Guillaume Du Fay', 367 n. 100).

to assume a profoundly formative, personal influence, well before his first documented appearance at Tours in 1460.

With that assumption we move beyond the question of justification by precedent, indeed beyond that of theoretical validation altogether. If we abandon the terms on which Tinctoris discussed musical theory, and return to the metaphor of mensural practice as language, we find that it is helpful in Busnoys's case for yet another reason: that it can do justice to the way notational devices acquired *meanings* in history: connotations, resonances, and overtones, to which no one was more sensitive, it seems, than Busnoys. Tinctoris's axiomatized musical system was closed, self-referential, and self-validating, but when we encounter signs like O2, C3 or ☾ (with implicit augmentation), or a practice like the redundant '3', we know—whether they are 'correct' or not—that each had a history of its own, that each can be associated with specific composers, works, and geographical areas, and that meaning and significance were read into them even then. In this sense one can read Busnoys's complex mensural profile almost as an autobiographical text, tracing back its various strands to a range of historical intertexts.

Excursus: *L'homme armé* Revisited

I have briefly illustrated such 'mensural intertextuality' in the case of the *Missa L'homme armé* (see above), but should now like to trace back its threads a little further, as a tentative essay in reading the 'text' of Busnoys's mensural profile. Busnoys's involvement in the *L'homme armé* history remains, like that history itself, a subject of some controversy. After the various recent debates I have become less and less persuaded, however, that there must be a single explanation to account for the genesis and development of the whole tradition, and that different hypotheses must therefore necessarily be incompatible. Perhaps the *L'homme armé* theme combined and attracted historical meanings in the same way as any other musical or literary text (or indeed notational device), and perhaps its polyphonic history eroded and engendered many such meanings—making the question of origins seem less relevant than that of enduring relevance in changing historical surroundings.

For instance, it is far from obvious that the *L'homme armé* tradition was consciously initiated as a tradition. After all, how could the composer of the first mass have suspected that others might follow his example, and have selected the *L'homme armé* tune in this awareness? There are many examples of mid-to-late fifteenth-century masses based on *chansons rustiques*, of which the anonymous *Missa Se tu te marie* in Trent 88 (composed probably in the 1450s) provides perhaps the most informative parallel.[56] The tenor melody of this cycle also appears in combinative chansons (like the *L'homme armé* tune), yet it is likely that both

the mass and these chansons represent independent borrowings from the widespread tradition of the French monophonic song. *Se tu te marie*, like *L'homme armé* and many other popular melodies, must have been universally known in the cities of central and northern France. Against this background there is no objection to assuming that the first few *L'homme armé* masses might have been composed independently, having no closer historical connection to *Il sera pour vous/L'homme armé* than *Missa Se tu te marie* has to, say, *Robinet/Se tu te marie/Hélas, pourquoy*.[57] Indeed there are several such mass 'families' on common cantus firmi in the 1450s and 1460s (for instance, on *O rosa bella*, *Nos amis*, *Le serviteur*, and later *O Venus bant*), and as groups these show little more internal coherence than any randomly chosen group of masses from this period, never mind the strikingly dissimilar early *L'homme armé* masses by Ockeghem, Regis, and Caron. Nor do we necessarily need to read a deep intrinsic significance in the original choice of *L'homme armé* as a mass tenor. To extend the comparison: *Se tu te marie* might at most have been the somewhat inappropriate choice for an engagement or wedding mass ('If you get married, you'll regret it: And when? And when? Before the year is out!'),[58] but plainly there is little in its text and prior history to account for its elevation to a mass tenor.

The upshot of these considerations might be to remove the historical and explanatory weight from *Il sera pour vous/L'homme armé*, from the earliest *L'homme armé* masses, and perhaps even from the original meaning and context of the tune, and to locate the actual *creation* of the mass tradition at a later point.[59] Seen in this light, Busnoys's *L'homme armé* mass need not have been the first such cycle to have established the tradition. I have elsewhere expressed my agreement with Paula Higgins and Reinhard Strohm that the setting probably dates from the late 1460s,[60] yet see no necessary conflict with Taruskin's persuasive argument that its creation represents a decisive moment in the early *L'homme armé* history.[61] Perhaps one could view it as the point where a composer wrote so singular

[56] Fos. 77^{v}–84^{r}, no published edition; cantus firmus identified by Reinhard Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges* (Oxford, 1985), 141. See Howard M. Brown, *Music in the French Secular Theater, 1400–1550* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), nos. 154 and 273; further compositions listed in Maria Rika Maniates, 'Combinative Chansons in the Escorial Chansonnier', *Musica disciplina*, 29 (1975), 61–123 at 96–7.

[57] Edition in Maniates, *The Combinative Chanson*, 24–5.

[58] Ibid., p. xxvii.

[59] See also the pertinent comments by Richard Taruskin ('Antoine Busnoys and the *L'homme armé* Tradition', 288): 'The question of who wrote the first *Missa L'Homme armé* is distinguishable from the ultimately more interesting question of how the tradition got started. In the analogous and familiar case of the English *In nomine* fantasia, for example, the prototype, to be sure, was a Mass section by Taverner, but the origins of the tradition of emulation should probably be associated with the Elizabethan composer Christopher Tye, who wrote no fewer than twenty-one instrumental settings on its cantus firmus.'

[60] Paula Higgins, review of Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, in *JAMS* 42 (1989), 150–61 at 155 n. 15; Strohm, *The Rise of European Music*, 467–8; Wegman, *Born for the Muses*, 97 n. 10.

[61] 'Antoine Busnoys and the *L'Homme armé* tradition', 292–3; 'even if his *Missa L'Homme armé* should eventually turn out to be the second [or third, or fourth] to have been composed, Antoine Busnoys still stands as *fons et origo* of the great tradition'.

and significant a work that it invited imitation and playful allusion, thus transforming an ordinary mass family into a genuine tradition.

The meaning of the 'l'homme armé' theme itself need not have been singular and fixed, and it seems important to keep an open mind about the range of possible meanings it could accumulate in history. It is entirely possible, as Richard Taruskin has suggested,[62] that Charles the Bold became identified with 'the armed man'—at least as soon as he could back up his political ambitions with military force, after 1465—yet in the crucial years around 1460 he was decidedly out of favour at the Burgundian court, and well removed from the corridors of political power.[63] The textual phrase 'l'homme armé' could become associated with many things: there was a 'maison l'homme armé' in de rue des Chanoines at Cambrai,[64] and a 'rue de l'homme armé' in Paris.[65] The song itself was to become associated with the Turkish threat, of course,[66] but one needs to read the texts of only a few *chansons rustiques* to realize that their concern with matters political, sexual, and religious is decidedly tongue-in-cheek, if not downright coarse.[67] Just as in the case of *Se tu te marie*, it must seem open to question whether the song's text and prior history must necessarily account for its elevation to a mass tenor in the 1450s, or indeed that we could conclude anything about its original meaning and significance on the basis of its subsequent polyphonic history.

On the other hand, it only illustrates the strength of 'mensural intertextuality' that a major obstacle to this interpretation should be Busnoys's employment of the sign C3 in the *L'homme armé* mass. As a conscious allusion to the pre-mass origins of the *L'homme armé* tune (see above), it seems to contradict my suggestion that the mass tradition might have transcended its monophonic background altogether. There is an additional reason why this seems significant. During his years in the Loire Valley (1460–5) Busnoys became actively involved in writing combinative songs, incorporating numerous *chansons rustiques* in 'chanson à refrain' form, just like *L'homme armé*. Yet none of his settings from these years looks remotely like *Il sera pour vous/L'homme armé*. Under his hands, and those of Ockeghem, the combinative chanson developed into a narrow formal type, characterized by the mensuration ¢ (rather than C, O, or C3), scoring in four parts

[62] 'Antoine Busnoys and the *L'Homme armé* Tradition', 273–83.

[63] Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy* (London, 1970), 338–46. One should take this circumstance into account when considering Taruskin's speculation that Charles the Bold might have commissioned the first *L'homme armé* mass on behalf of the Order of the Golden Fleece, in 1461 (Communication *JAMS* 1987, 149).

[64] Wright, 'Dufay at Cambrai', 211.

[65] Isabelle Cazeaux, *French Music in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (New York, 1975), 147: 'One of the oldest streets of Paris, which was demolished about 1880 and whose original houses were said to date from the reign of Louis VII in the twelfth century, was the *rue de l'Homme armé* . . . Historians have speculated that the *rue de l'Homme armé* may have derived its name from the sign of an inn with the image of a man in armor—which is said to have existed as early as 1432.'

[66] See the text of *Il sera pour vous/L'homme armé*, as edited and translated in *The Mellon Chansonnier*, ed. Leeman L. Perkins and Howard Garey (New Haven, 1979), i. 330–5.

[67] Cf. the editions and lively translations in Maniates, *The Combinative Chanson*, pp. xviii–lvi.

with low contratenor (rather than three), and systematic use of canon and imitation.[68] Quick triple metres, if used at all, were now invariably notated in ¢3 with perfect *tempus*, rather than in C3 with major prolation. Busnoys's awareness (expressed in his Tu solus) that the *L'homme armé* melody would once have been notated in C3 seems like an allusion to an earlier practice, a practice which both he and Ockeghem had superseded in the years around 1460. C3 was a sign that the tune could not cast off, it seems, at least not in 'ut iacet' notation, even though it did in the settings of nearly all his contemporaries.[69] Yet by the late 1460s it was an exceedingly rare and (according to Tinctoris) erroneous sign. We cannot attribute Busnoys's use of it to a belated interest in historical backgrounds alone: somehow the composer must have been personally acquainted with those backgrounds, possibly before his years in Tours.

Of course this is implicitly to open the door for Richard Taruskin's speculation that Busnoys composed *Il sera pour vous/L'homme armé*,[70] perhaps now as early as the late 1440s or 1450s. But that is only one of many possibilities. For the moment it will be safer to note that the chanson evidently originated as an occasional piece. It is full of insider jokes, alludes to circumstances taken as understood (involving the Burgundian singer Symon le Breton), and borrows a popular tune that should have been familiar enough for the quotation to be perceived as genuinely witty. A one-off piece of this kind could not plausibly bear the explanatory weight even for the first few *L'homme armé* masses, let alone the subsequent tradition. A widely known popular tune, on the other hand, could easily account for an early mass family as well as any number of combinative chansons—as the case of *Se tu te marie* illustrates. Busnoys may or may not have known the setting during the years of his early training, but more significant, it seems, is his acquaintance with the kinds of contexts in which such pieces originated. This would be the simpler explanation for his later use of C3, involving fewer auxiliary hypotheses on the historical importance of *Il sera pour vous/L'homme armé*.

What we know about these contexts musically is that they involved numerous melodies in quick triple metre that were memorable enough not to require written transmission, yet were interpreted in C3 (with major prolation) as soon as they were committed to paper. What we know about them historically is a great

[68] Wegman, review of Maniates, *The Combinative Chanson*, 512–13. I am somewhat hesitant to conclude with David Fallows that the use of imitation in *Il sera pour vous/L'homme armé* parallels the much more systematic and extensive application of this device in combinative songs of the 1460s and 1470s—if only because several phrases of the *L'homme armé* melody would have invited imitation in any context (as is true also of *O rosa bella* and *Se la face ay pale*). See David Fallows, 'Robert Morton's Songs: A Study of Styles in the Mid-Fifteenth Century' (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1978), 214.

[69] A notable (and perhaps significant) exception can be found in the third of the six *L'homme armé* masses in Naples VI E 40 (cf. Taruskin, 'Antoine Busnoys and the *L'Homme armé* Tradition', 287–9). Although I would give my eye-teeth for six new masses by Busnoys, I remain highly sceptical that the Naples set is by him.

[70] 'Antoine Busnoys and the *L'Homme armé* Tradition', 289–92.

deal less specific: most writers have agreed on a bourgeois social milieu, and a civic context involving theatrical performances and communal festivities of various kinds.[71] By some coincidence, it is in a context of exactly this kind that the phrase 'l'homme armé' happens to make yet another appearance—and, intriguingly, in direct association with the Turkish threat. Several years ago I came across a tantalizing (though sadly undocumented) reference to a 'jeu de l'homme armé', in a nineteenth-century study of street life in medieval Paris:[72]

> Le jeu de la quintaine ou *de l'homme armé*, dans lequel on combattait un mannequin habillé *en More* et placé sur un pivot, de telle sorte que les coups portés ailleurs que dans le tronc ou dans le visage faisaient tourner la machine, qui sanglait un rude coup d'estramaçon au maladroit . . . (my italics)

Attempts to follow up this promising lead in the extensive literature on the quintain have been disappointing. The practice of fighting Turk's heads (or manikins dressed as Turks) in civic games and jousts seems to have been universal in the cities of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe,[73] but according to seventeenth-century tradition, at least, the custom of calling this *la course à l'homme armé* seems to have been specifically Italian.[74] What appears from the few leads we have, however, is that whenever or wherever the phrase 'l'homme armé' was associated with the quintain (a game which normally required no more than a barrel or a shield), it referred specifically to a Turk.

We are relatively well informed about chivalric (and mock-chivalric) games and jousts in the cities of northern France and the Low Countries: these were municipal activities, organized and financed along lines similar to mystery plays, involving public ceremonies of various kinds, the participation of trumpeters, minstrels, and heralds, and leaving no small impact on the population at large.[75] This is the kind of civic context in which *chansons rustiques*, and the *L'homme armé* melody in particular, must have thrived. Civic jousting festivities did not exclude

[71] Cf. Howard M. Brown, 'The *Chanson rustique*: Popular Elements in the 15th- and 16th-Century Chanson', *JAMS* 12 (1959), 16–26 at 18; *Music in the French Secular Theater*, *passim*.

[72] V. Fournel, *Les Rues du vieux Paris: Gallerie populaire et pittoresque* (Paris, 1897), 190.

[73] Certainly in France, Germany, and Italy, but also, for instance, in England; see J. R. V. Barker, *The Tournament in England, 1100–1400* (Suffolk, 1986), 150: 'The fifteenth century treatise, *Knyghthode and Bataile*, which is a verse paraphrase of the classical *De Re Militari* by Vegetius, says that young men should first be taught to fight by means of the quintain which the versifier urged him to imagine to be a Turk for "though he be slayn, noon harm is".'

[74] L. Clare, *La Quintaine, la course de bague et le jeu des têtes: Étude historique et ethno-linguistique d'une famille de jeux équestres* (Paris, 1983), 174 and 243, citing a French jousting treatise from 1669: 'Les italiens la nomment [i.e. the quintain] la Course à l'Homme Armé & le Sarrasin, parce qu'ils transfigurent ce Faquin en Turc, en More, ou en Sarrasin pour rendre ces Courses plus mysterieuses.'

[75] See particularly J. Vale, *Edward III and Chivalry* (Suffolk, 1982), ch. 2 ('Civic *festes* and Society in the Low Countries and Northern France'), 25–41, especially 28: 'Evidently the whole town [Lille] enthusiastically emulated the jousters on whatever came to hand, for besides barrels, small trucks or barrows . . . and even tables are mentioned. The re-enactment of these [14th-c.] bans, suggesting that the jousting "craze" was an inevitable annual phenomenon . . . are indications of the way in which the youthful population continued the activities of the *feste* in the Lille streets.'

the participation of the higher nobility: Charles the Bold, for instance, attended the jousts at Bruges in 1457, and his court accounts mention payments on this occasion to Ghent trumpeters and a Tournai singer.[76] Yet, returning to the young Busnoys, in whichever south Netherlands town he spent the years of his musical training, he could not possibly have escaped its annual jousting *festes*, nor perhaps active involvement as a musician.[77]

One might perhaps view quintains with Turkish manikins in psychoanalytic terms, as games meant to master collective anxiety and guilt—in this case over the Turkish victories in the East, and their occupation of the Holy Land. This could explain why the *L'homme armé* song—unusually for *chansons rustiques*—strikes a note of *fear*, and calls for collective armament: everybody would have known that 'the armed man' was in reality a mere puppet in the market square, dangerous only to the extent that it could revolve if mis-hit, and strike back at its attacker. The sense of fear could be comically exaggerated, in other words, precisely because there was a controlled outlet in the game itself, channelling public emotion in expressions of aggression, vindication, and laughter:[78]

> The man, the man, the armed man is to be feared. All around it has been cried that everyone must arm himself, with an iron hauberk. The man, the man, the armed man is to be feared.

This interpretation may not exhaust all the contemporary meanings of the phrase 'l'homme armé',[79] yet it does pull together all the main threads pursued so far: the *L'homme armé* melody, the sign C3, the *chanson rustique* and its civic contexts, the quintain, the Turk, the sense of humour, and Busnoys's early years in the southern Low Countries. It might even yield a plausible face-value reading of *Il sera pour vous/L'homme armé*, if one accepts that this piece might have been written for a festive civic tournament in which Symon le Breton was somehow prominently involved:[80]

> He will be fought for you, the dreaded Turk, Master Symon—there's no doubt about it—and struck down with an axe-spur. We hold his pride to have been beaten. If he falls into your hands, the felon, he will be fought for you, the redoubted Turk, Master Symon. In a

[76] Wegman, *Born for the Muses*, 35; Vale makes a similar point about Philip the Good (Valenciennes 1435, and Lille 1463 and 1464): *Edward III and Chivalry*, 30 and 115 n. 66.

[77] Among the towns which had prominent jousting *festes* were: Ghent, Bruges, Douai, Lille, Tournai, Valenciennes, Saint-Quentin, Saint-Omer, Arras, Ypres, Doullens, Sluis, Aardenburg, as well as many cities further south, in France (Vale, *Edward III and Chivalry*, 26).

[78] Trans. after Perkins and Garey, *The Mellon Chansonnier*, i. 334.

[79] In particular, no contradiction is implied with Flynn Warmington's important findings on ceremonies of 'the armed man' (above, Ch. 5): it would only be a tribute to medieval creativity and ingenuity if the *L'homme armé* tradition linked together a range of themes originating in different historical contexts—none of which should necessarily have been decisive on its own.

[80] Trans. Perkins and Garey, *The Mellon Chansonnier*, 332. The tenor and contratenor of the song repeatedly cry 'à l'assault! à l'assault!' For a different interpretation of this notoriously elusive text, see Fallows, 'Robert Morton's Songs', 210–13.

short time you will have beaten him, to God's pleasure. Then they will say 'Long live ol' Symon the Breton, because he has fallen on the Turk!' . . .

Whatever the strengths or weaknesses of this interpretation, it needs to be stressed that the mass tradition was to carry the *L'homme armé* theme to an entirely different intellectual and musical plane. The enduring relevance of the theme must have depended crucially on the typical medieval ability to transform even the slightest textual material by elaborating its verbal, musical, religious, and political resonances in totally unexpected directions.[81] One could think of no better parallel than the image of the Golden Fleece which, although of Greek mythological origin, became incorporated into ever more densely woven complexes of biblical imagery, in conscious literary and propagandistic efforts.[82] As with all traditions, we should probably expect less explanatory force from the unpromising origins of the *L'homme armé* history, and more from the astonishing flexibility and fertility with which composers transcended these in musical contexts resonant with new significance. In Busnoys's *L'homme armé* mass those origins still left a residue of meaning in the sign C3, suggesting the composer's personal acquaintance with an earlier history. Yet the very quality and complexity of his work only serve to highlight the comparative triviality of those origins, and remain, in the end, a tribute to his own extraordinary musical achievement.

Consequences for Attributive Research

Busnoys's use of the figure '3' has indirectly enabled us to identify the anonymous motet *Gaude caelestis Domina* as a work by him. This illustrates yet another aspect of the image of mensural practice as language: if the peculiar mensural 'language' of a composer is sufficiently idiomatic, we should be able to recognize it easily in works transmitted anonymously.

In some cases the suspicion that we may be dealing with a work by Busnoys in a reasonably authentic reading can be all but irresistible. A good example is the motet *Incomprehensibilia firme/Praeter rerum ordinem*, which survives anonymously in Verona 755.[83] The three sections of this piece have the successive mensurations of O, O2, and O3 (all in perfect minor *modus*), a layout identical to that of the Gloria of Busnoys's *Missa O crux lignum triumphale*. Yet it is in the small notational detail that one really feels on familiar territory. For instance, in the third section there are four occurrences of the English coloured pattern with

[81] For a particularly impressive example, see the verbal canons and tropes in the anonymous set of six *L'homme armé* masses in Naples VI E 40, as edited and translated by Barbara Haggh and Steven Moore Whiting (Haggh, Communication, *JAMS* 40 (1987), 139–43).

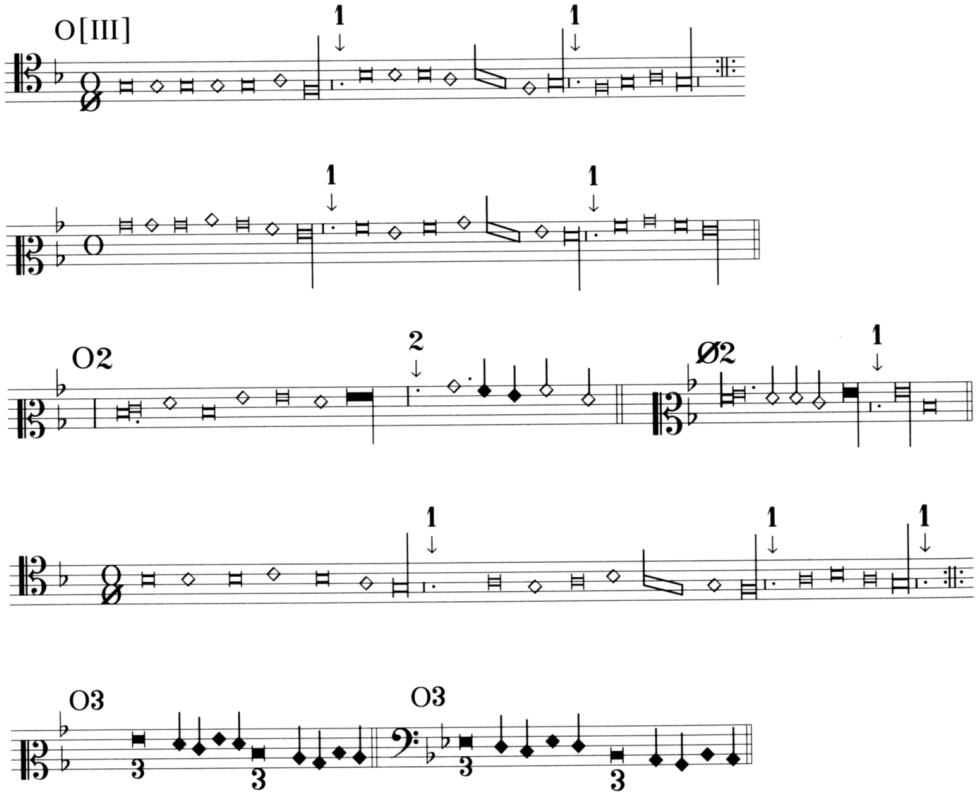
[82] Johan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (London, 1955), 84–6.

[83] Fos. 101^{v}–104^{r}; no published edition. I have speculated on the possibility of Busnoys's authorship in 'Another Mass by Busnoys?', 4 n. 15.

figures '3' written underneath.[84] Moreover, of the notational practices listed in Ex. 8.1 above, the one itemized as (1) makes a frequent occurrence, and (2) also appears once (see Ex. 8.2). This makes *Incomprehensibilia* the only known work not attributed to Busnoys in which these curious practices are applied. The notation, in short, looks exactly as one would have expected in a 'lost' Busnoys motet.

Musically, too, there are close parallels with the motets of Busnoys. Each of the three parts opens with a tenorless section in which one voice states the cantus firmus in long note-values, before it is repeated in the 'proper' tenor statement in the next section.[85] As a structural device this recalls *Victimae paschali laudes* (both of whose parts open with literal pre-emptive statements of cantus firmus), and also *Anima mea/Stirps Jesse* (whose two 'sections' similarly open with pre-emptive

Ex. 8.2. Mensural usages in Anon., *Incomprehensibilia/Praeter rerum ordinem* (Verona 755, fos. 101^{v}–104^{r})



[84] In the section starting 'Impetra quod eius pater', top voice and bass, *tempora* 16–17 (stated twice in succession, the two parts moving in parallel tenths, and the second '3' being omitted in all four patterns). The coloured rhythmic pattern is also found in the second part (in the section starting 'In virgine mater', top voice, *modi* 14–15 = *tempora* 41–2 and 44–5), but not with the figure '3'.

[85] Contratenor in the first part, top voice in the second, and bass in the third.

statements, albeit in different rhythmic elaborations).[86] What the pre-imitations in *Incomprehensibilia* share with those in the latter motet is that the text of the cantus firmus is written in the stave as an alternative to the motet text.[87] These are extremely rare (and at the very least Netherlandish) practices: they were to be applied extensively in the later masses and motets by Jacob Obrecht.[88]

Yet however irresistible Busnoys's authorship may seem, I am no longer persuaded of the benefits of attempting to drive it home. Here another case needs to be mentioned, that of the anonymous *Missa L'ardant desir*. When I first transcribed this remarkable work, in 1987, almost every feature seemed to suggest Busnoys's authorship: extensive use of O2, the absence of a tempo shift in this mensuration, mensural transformation, a range of other schematic manipulation procedures (including two which directly paralleled Busnoys's *Missa L'homme armé*), Greek-flavoured verbal canons, contrived Latin-Greek voice-names, motivic devices known to be typical of Busnoys, and transmission next to a mass securely ascribed to Busnoys. In my article 'Another Mass by Busnoys?' I tried to make the case, yet in hindsight, and particularly after two published exchanges with Richard Taruskin,[89] I feel that in staking everything on the problem of authorship, my approach ultimately became historically reductive. The *Missa L'ardant desir* is an extremely significant work, and vital to our understanding of Busnoys, and at the end of the day it deserves more sensitive historical treatment than one in terms of authorship alone.[90] The latter issue is not only fundamentally undecidable, but any extended discussion of it will implicitly affirm the questionable values underlying modern notions of canon and authorship, and in effect legitimate the historical distortion caused by those notions—in collected editions, encyclopaedias, recordings, and music histories.

Moving away from the issue of authorship, the question of historical significance proves to be refreshingly uncontroversial. For we can state without exaggeration that both *Incomprehensibilia* and *Missa L'ardant desir* belong firmly to the world of Busnoys's sacred music, and add significantly to its rich tissue of historical meanings and resonances. They do so in different ways, however. While *Incomprehensibilia* is clearly an intimate cognate of the Brussels 5557 motets, and crucial to our understanding of them, I am now inclined to suggest a much earlier dating for *Missa L'ardant desir*, possibly even in the years around

[86] See Stephan, *Die burgundisch-niederländische Motette*, 78–80; Edgar H. Sparks, *Cantus Firmus in Mass and Motet, 1420–1520* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1963), 212–15; Wegman, 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 241–4.

[87] Verona 755, fos. 102^{r}, 102^{v}, and 104^{r}; cf. Brussels 5557, fo. 83^{v}.

[88] Wegman, *Born for the Muses*, 22, 88, 95, 101, 110–12, 116, 119–24, 126–7, 166–7, 175–8, 184–7, 202, 205, 208–11, 259, 288.

[89] Correspondence, *ML* 71 (1990), 631–5, and 72 (1991), 347–50.

[90] I have subsequently attempted to give it such treatment, in 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 266–71.

1460.[91] Its style remains something of a mystery, totally unlike the two securely ascribed Busnoys masses, as Richard Taruskin has observed, and in some ways faintly reminiscent of Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus* (with which it shares the D Dorian mode). Yet whereas the latter cycle is an exceedingly powerful work, and totally deserving of its remarkably successful career, it is difficult to find anything in *Missa L'ardant desir* to become genuinely excited about, either in its general stylistic profile or in any particular passage. Might we suspect in this mass the work of Busnoys's teacher, and a key, perhaps, to his later sense of loyalty—even if he never took his canonic complexities quite as far as did the *L'ardant desir* Master? If so, it may only strengthen the picture if I note the presence of no fewer than five cadential 'English Figures' in this work.[92] None of these is in coloration (let alone with the figure '3' underneath), yet I have demonstrated elsewhere that the tenors in the unique source of this mass are highly corrupt versions of canon resolutions, a circumstance which rules out proximity to the autograph in any case.[93]

It might seem, by now, as if the 'English Figure' was far more widespread in Continental music than the name suggests. Yet its frequency there is indeed significantly lower than in English music, and becomes all but negligible after the 1450s. It is precisely because my focus here is on the historical backgrounds of Busnoys's English-inspired habit that I have drawn attention to the exceptions that prove the rule—all of which must originate from the southern Netherlands, and find a context here (at least in the years around 1450) in other adoptions of English devices.

Moving still within the narrow circle of Busnoys's backgrounds, then, it reinforces rather than dilutes the picture if we note that the 'English Figure' (in coloration, this time) appears twice in the anonymous *Missa Quant ce viendra*, copied in Trent 89 in the mid to late 1460s.[94] Richard Taruskin has persuasively argued that this is a work by Busnoys, noting, amongst other things, that it is the earliest known cycle based on a chanson by him, and that the entire song is in fact incorporated as a contrafactum in the Et in Spiritum.[95] The notational picture is

[91] My previous dating, in the early 1470s, was based mainly on the prominent use of certain motivic devices ('Another Mass by Busnoys?', 12–18), yet is obviously weakened by the circumstance that very similar devices can be found in Dufay's *Missa Ecce ancilla Domini*, which must predate 1463 (see Sparks, *Cantus Firmus*, 230–1).

[92] Domine Deus, contratenor, *modus* 30 = *tempora* 89–90; Et incarnatus, top voice, *tempora* 59–60 (see 'Another Mass by Busnoys?', 14, Ex. 3, bar 20); Et resurrexit, top voice, *modus* 4 = *tempora* 11–12; Confiteor, top voice, *tempus* 48; Agnus Dei I, top voice, *tempus* 37.

[93] See 'Another Mass by Busnoys?', 7–12, and Correspondence (*ML* 1990), 635 n. For this reason, I am inclined not to read too much significance into the presence of a redundant dot of 'division' (identical to that itemized as (6) in Ex. 8.1) in the Sanctus, top voice, between *tempora* 33 and 34.

[94] Edited and tentatively attributed to Busnoys in *Busnoys LTW*, Music, 208–58 and Commentary, 94–100. The English Figures are in the Crucifixus, bars 18–19, and Et resurrexit, bar 9.

[95] A specifically Flemish context for this rare procedure can be found in the anonymous *Missa Nos amis* in Lucca 238, possibly a work by the Bruges composer Adrien Basin, who wrote the model. See Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 128 and 238–49.

not otherwise suggestive of Busnoys, and the style is quite unlike that of *Missa L'ardant desir* as well as that of the two securely ascribed masses.[96]

Yet there is much to suggest that this is a very early mass, possibly even from the 1450s. Apart from the English cadential formula we find several simultaneous rests in duos—an English-inspired feature to which I have drawn attention also in Ockeghem's *Missa Caput*, Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*, and Simon's *Missa O admirabile commercium*,[97] but which is exceedingly rare in any Continental mass from the 1460s or after. In the long stretches of four-part writing, the bass tends to follow the rhythmic movement of the tenor, enhancing the sonorous relief to the more active top voices whenever the cantus firmus is augmented, and causing, in effect, a textural 'layering' that was quite common in the 1450s.[98] Imitation, even of the most incidental kind, is rigorously avoided in these stretches (the only exception being the contrafactum), but crops up as soon as the texture is reduced to two parts. The general sense is that of a relatively undifferentiated stream of four-part counterpoint, moving in distinct stretches sharply demarcated from the connecting duos. There is little or nothing to suggest awareness of the new stylistic trends of the 1460s:[99] *Missa Quant ce viendra* could easily be the first competent mass setting by Busnoys, recognizably 'personal' only in its choice of model, a chanson handled much more independently and confidently than the mass.[100]

Returning finally to *Gaude caelestis Domina*, this is, if anything, a worthy addition to the Busnoys canon: clean-textured, sonorous, and written with a superbly controlled sense of drive (see below, App.). These qualities are not accidental: just as in Busnoys's two masses, the tenor moves in long note-values (though it is not handled schematically), around which the other voices keep regrouping, almost imperceptibly, in parallel third and tenth relationships. The latter way of writing could be exaggerated to tedious extremes, of course: it was to become notorious particularly in the compositions of Gaffurius. Yet Busnoys continuously shifts the parallel relationships, and not infrequently disguises them by subtly differentiating the parts rhythmically, thus creating a sense of linearity that seems unaccountably euphonious. Meanwhile, in the midst of all this activity, the tenor moves imperturbably in its own time, organizing the shifting sonorities around its long-held notes, and firmly maintaining the general sense of long-term continuity. It is the tenor's contribution—transparently audible at all times—that accounts for the seemingly effortless sense of drive in this motet. This is a key feature of Busnoys's sacred musical style: rather than demanding the continuous investment of each singer's energy (as often seems the case in Ockeghem's more

[96] See my comments on the style of *Missa L'homme armé* and related works by Busnoys, as well as Obrecht's emulation in *Missa Petrus apostolus*; *Born for the Muses*, 88–97.

[97] See above, n. 49.

[98] See Wegman, 'Petrus de Domarto's *Missa Spiritus almus*', 282–8.

[99] Ibid. 277–82, and Sparks, *Cantus Firmus*, 219–41.

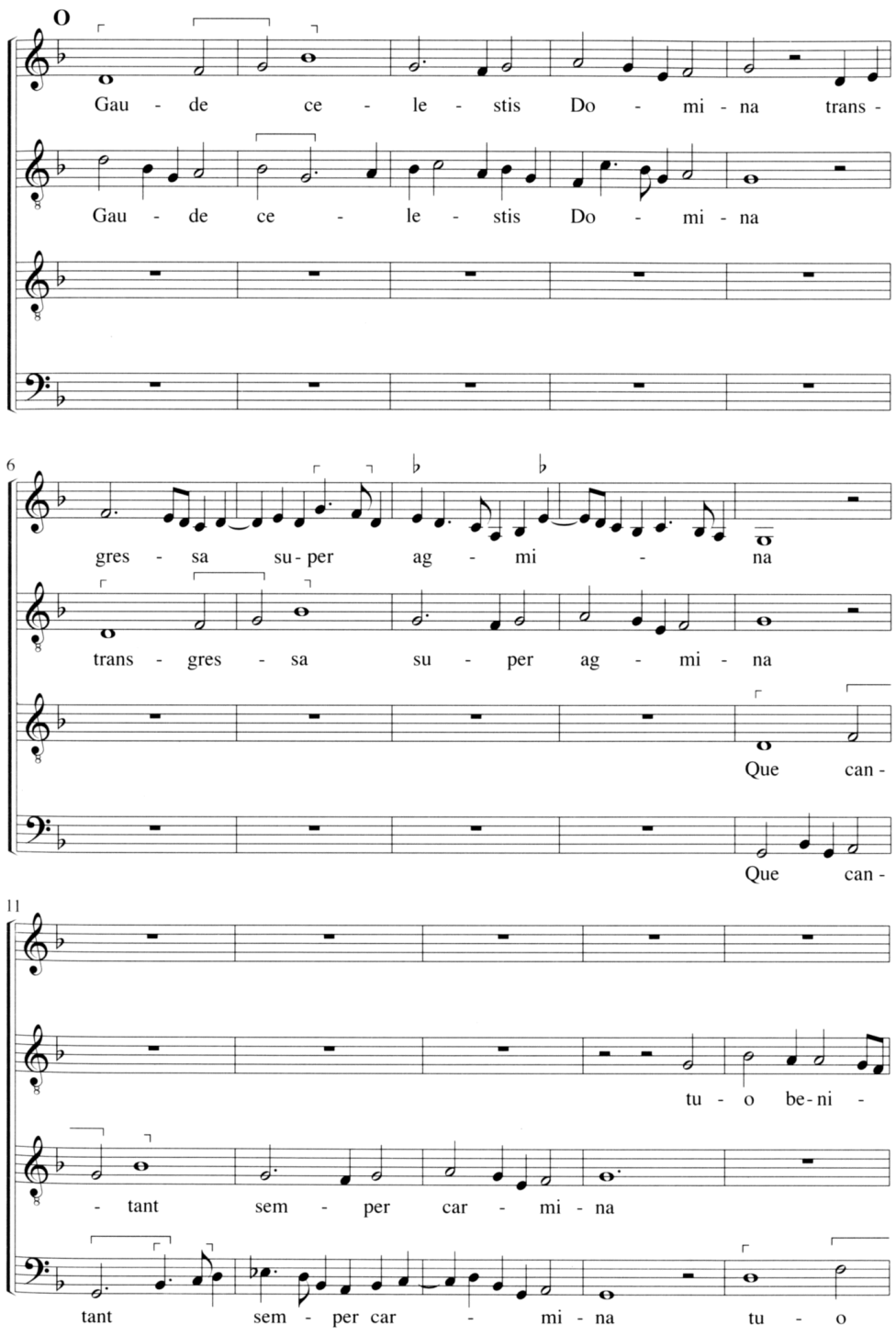
[100] Strohm, *The Rise of European Music*, 457–9.

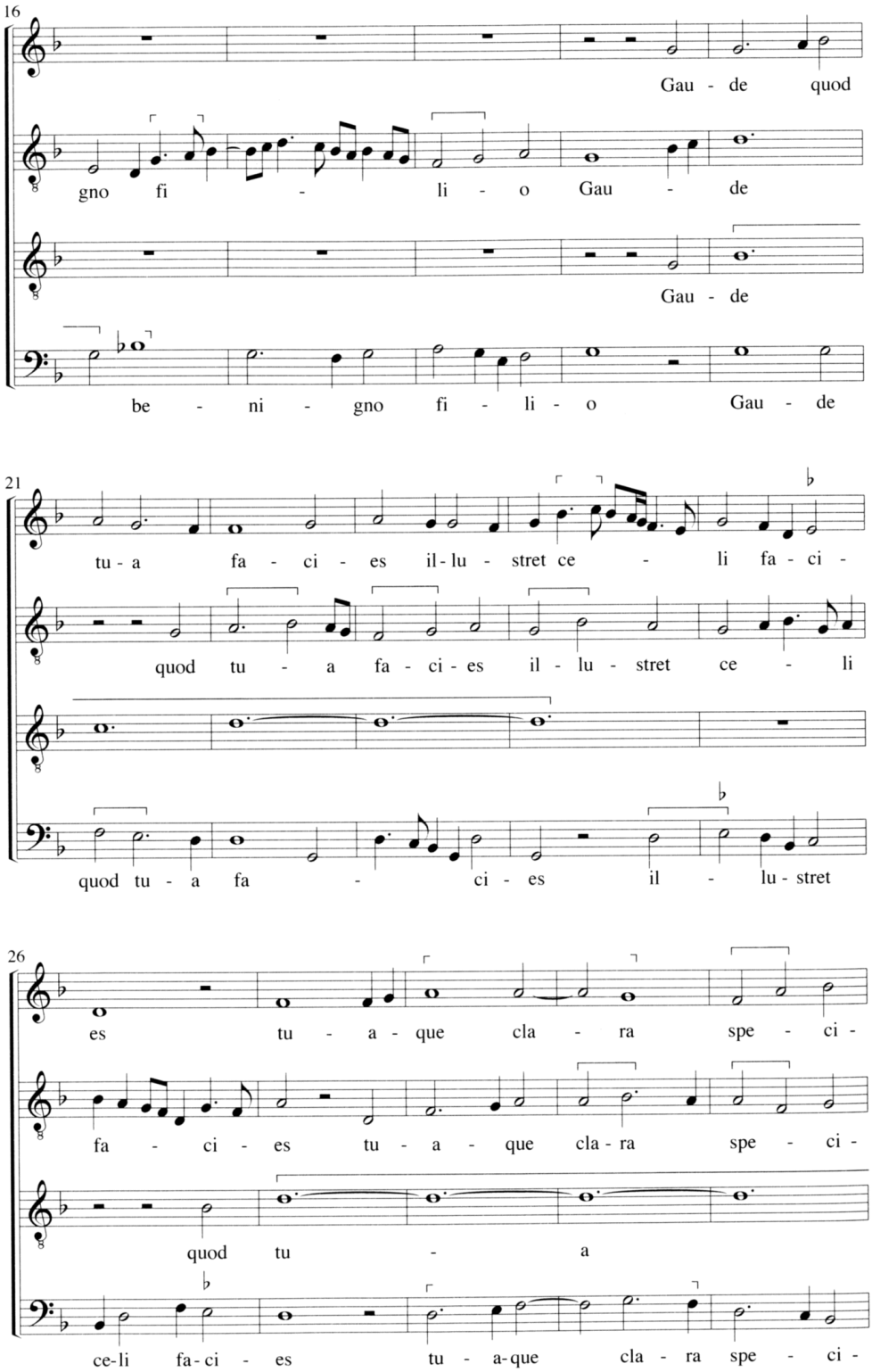
densely written works), he creates and *ensemble* in which the voice-parts are constantly helped along by each other, and by the tenor more than most. But for the tenor, however (a genuine *fundamentum relationis* in Tinctoris's sense; *D* s.v. Tenor), each part is given enough melodic and rhythmic detail to relish individually. This is singer's music, if nothing else, seemingly as easy to write as it is to listen to. Yet nothing would require more hard work than to strike Busnoys's balance of sonority, linearity, rhythmic differentiation, drive, and long-term control: there can be no pastiche of vintage Busnoys.

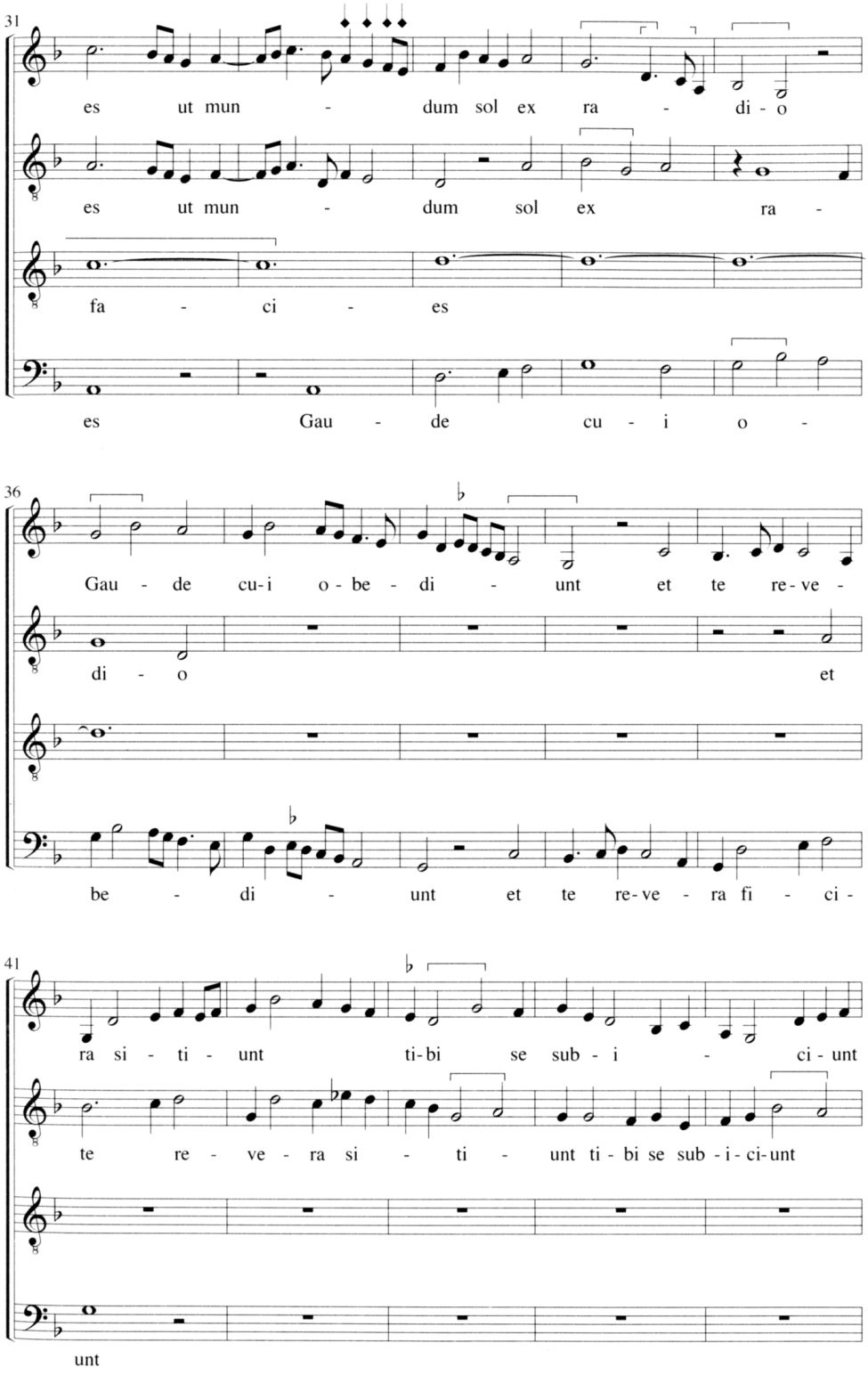
Against the sheer luxuriance of Busnoys's part-writing, Tinctoris's objection to the notation of bars 71–2 (grateful though we must be to him for 'rescuing' *Gaude caelestis Domina*), seems to confirm all the stereotypes of the hair-splitting pedant. In the face of such artistic accomplishment, did the theorist really have nothing better to do than complain about the figures '3'—which he could easily have erased from his copy if they so annoyed him? Yet the truth, as I have attempted to show in this contribution, is that if we stereotype either Tinctoris or Busnoys, it is we who will be the poorer for it. As major fifteenth-century minds they should both be dear to us, and they deserve to have the common ground between them acknowledged. And thus it is only fair that I should end this essay with the observation that their common ground encompassed much more than mensural learning alone. For it is Tinctoris who, without any hint of envy, ranked his compeer Busnoys among the leaders of those whose works 'are so perfumed with sweetness that in my opinion, at least, they are to be considered most worthy not only for men and demigods, but even for the immortal gods themselves.'[101]

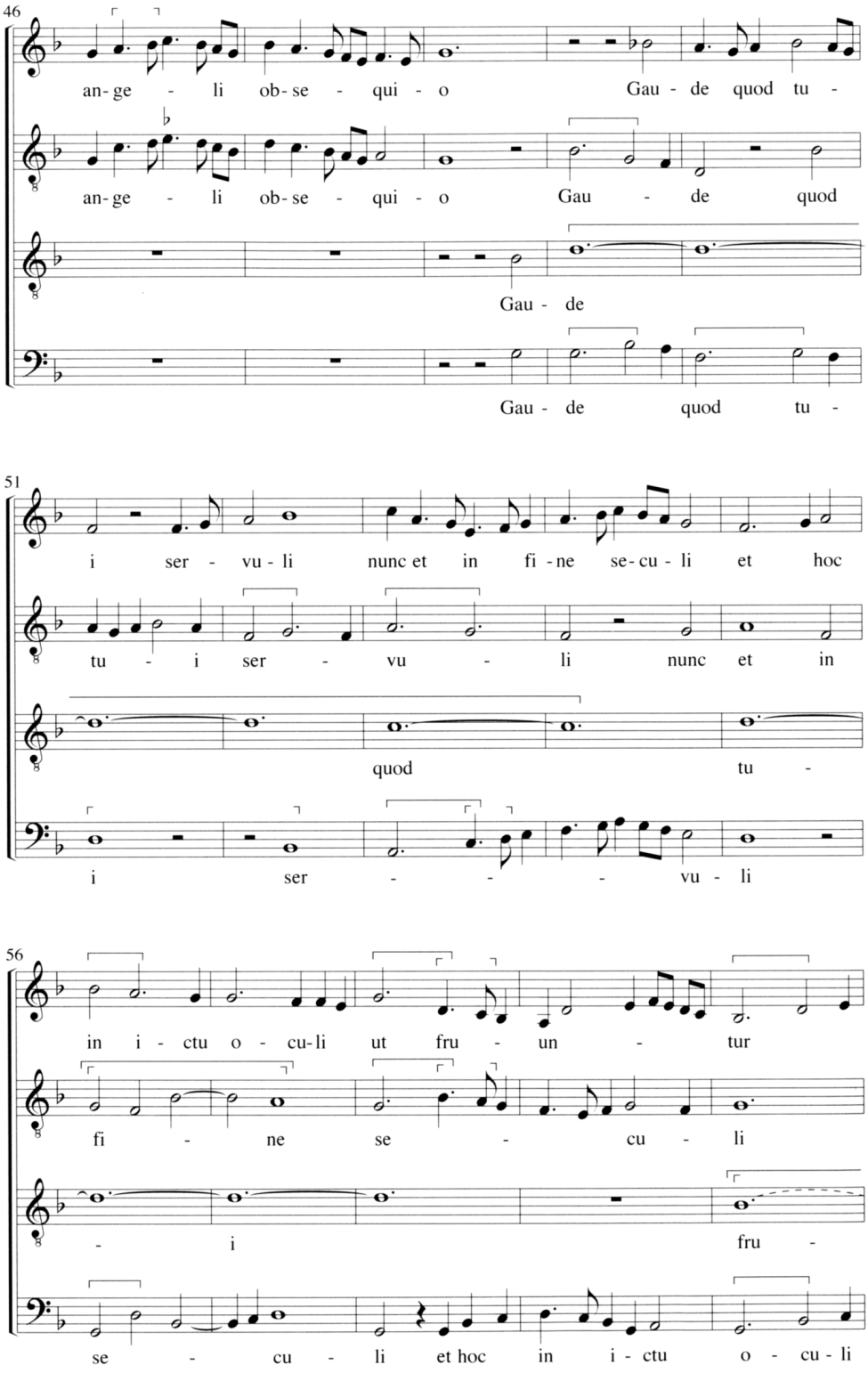
[101] *C* Prologus 17–18; see also Wegman, 'Sense and Sensibility in Late-Medieval Music'.

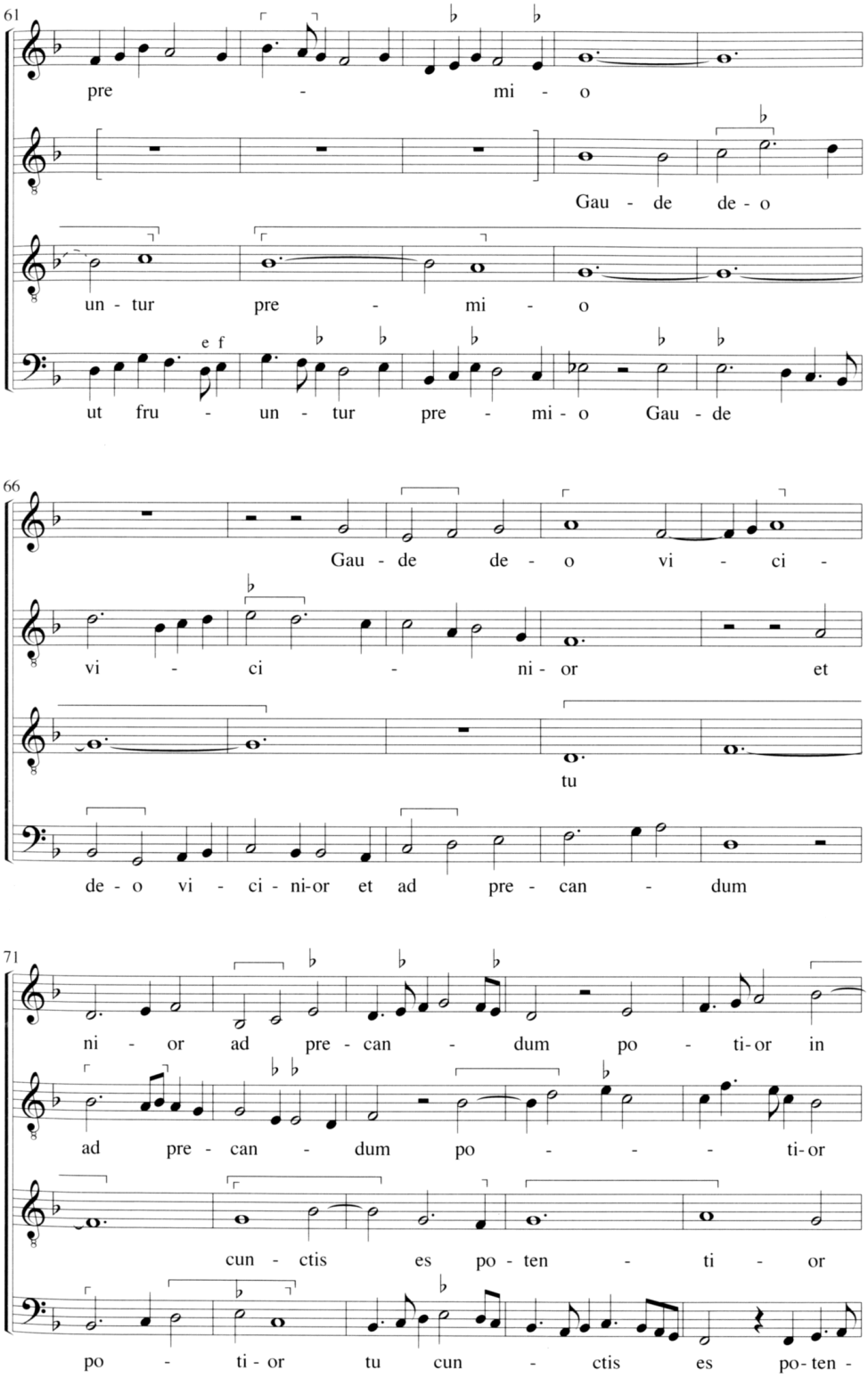
Appendix
Antoine Busnoys, *Gaude caelestis Domina*
(Cappella Sistina 15, fos. 242v–245r)

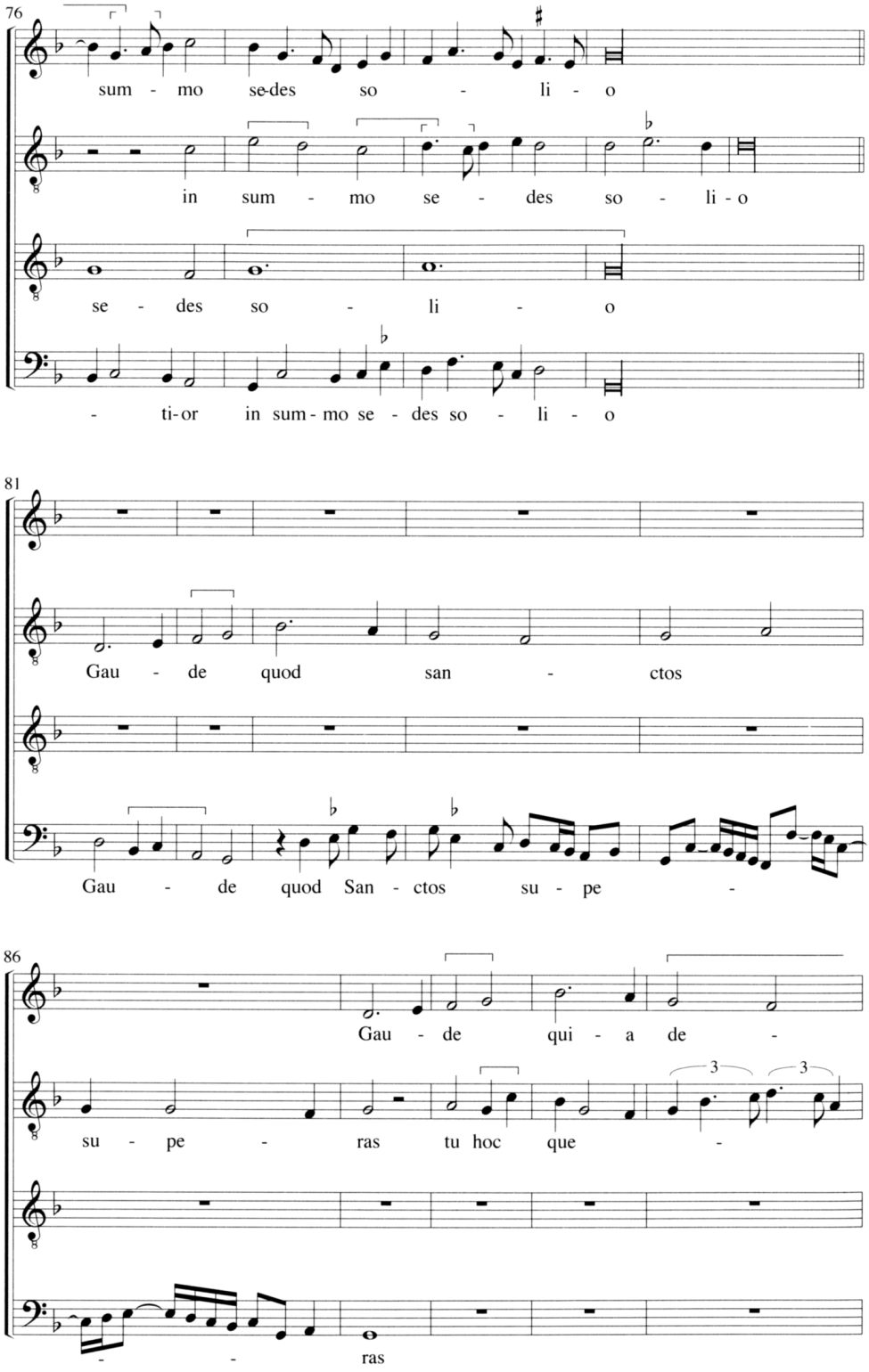


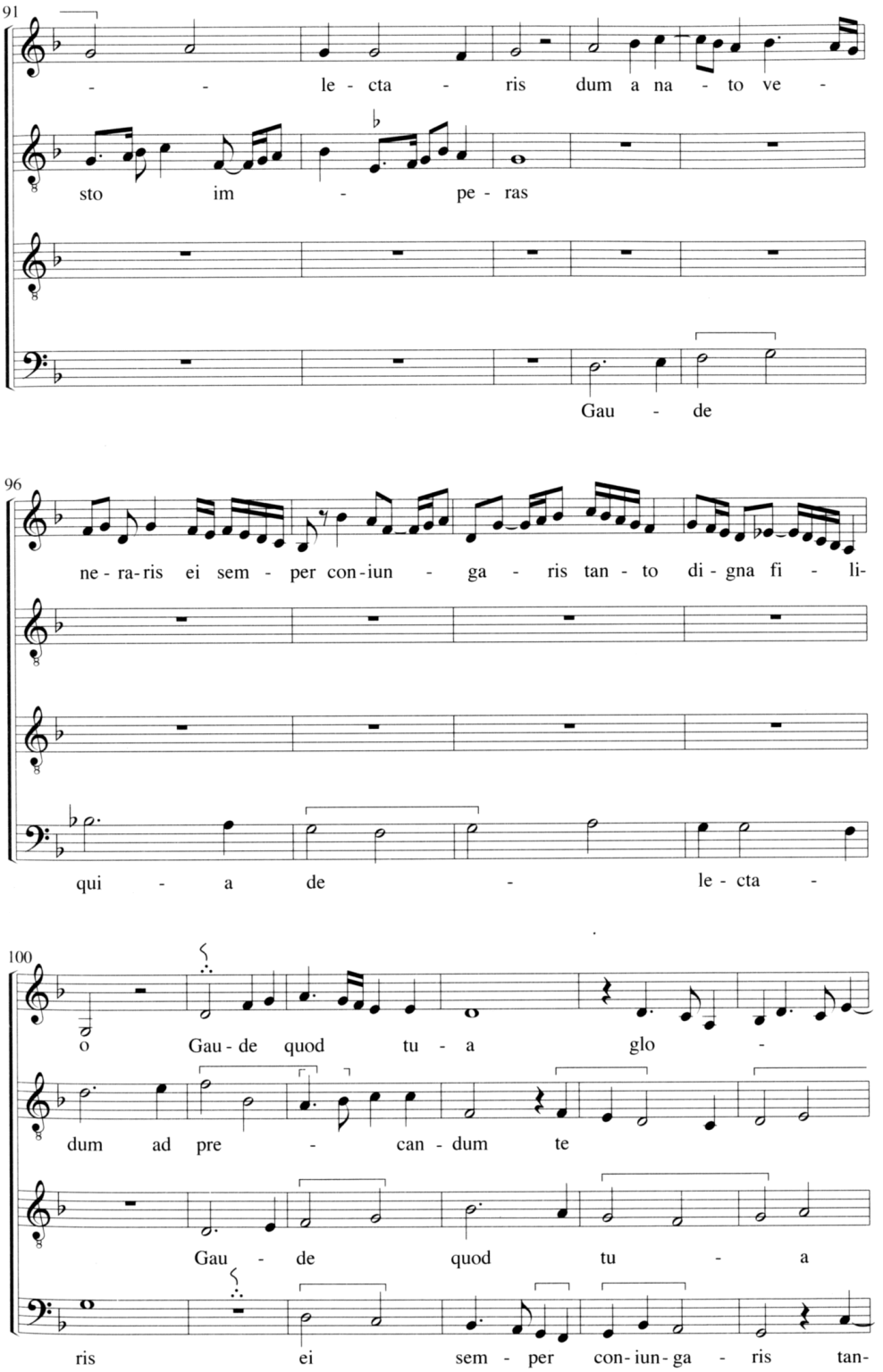

16
Gau - de quod
gno fi - li - o Gau - de
Gau - de
be - ni - gno fi - li - o Gau - de
21
tu - a fa - ci - es il - lu - stret ce - li fa - ci -
quod tu - a fa - ci - es il - lu - stret ce - li
quod tu - a fa - ci - es il - lu - stret
26
es tu - a - que cla - ra spe - ci -
fa - ci - es tu - a - que cla - ra spe - ci -
quod tu - a
ce - li fa - ci - es tu - a - que cla - ra spe - ci -

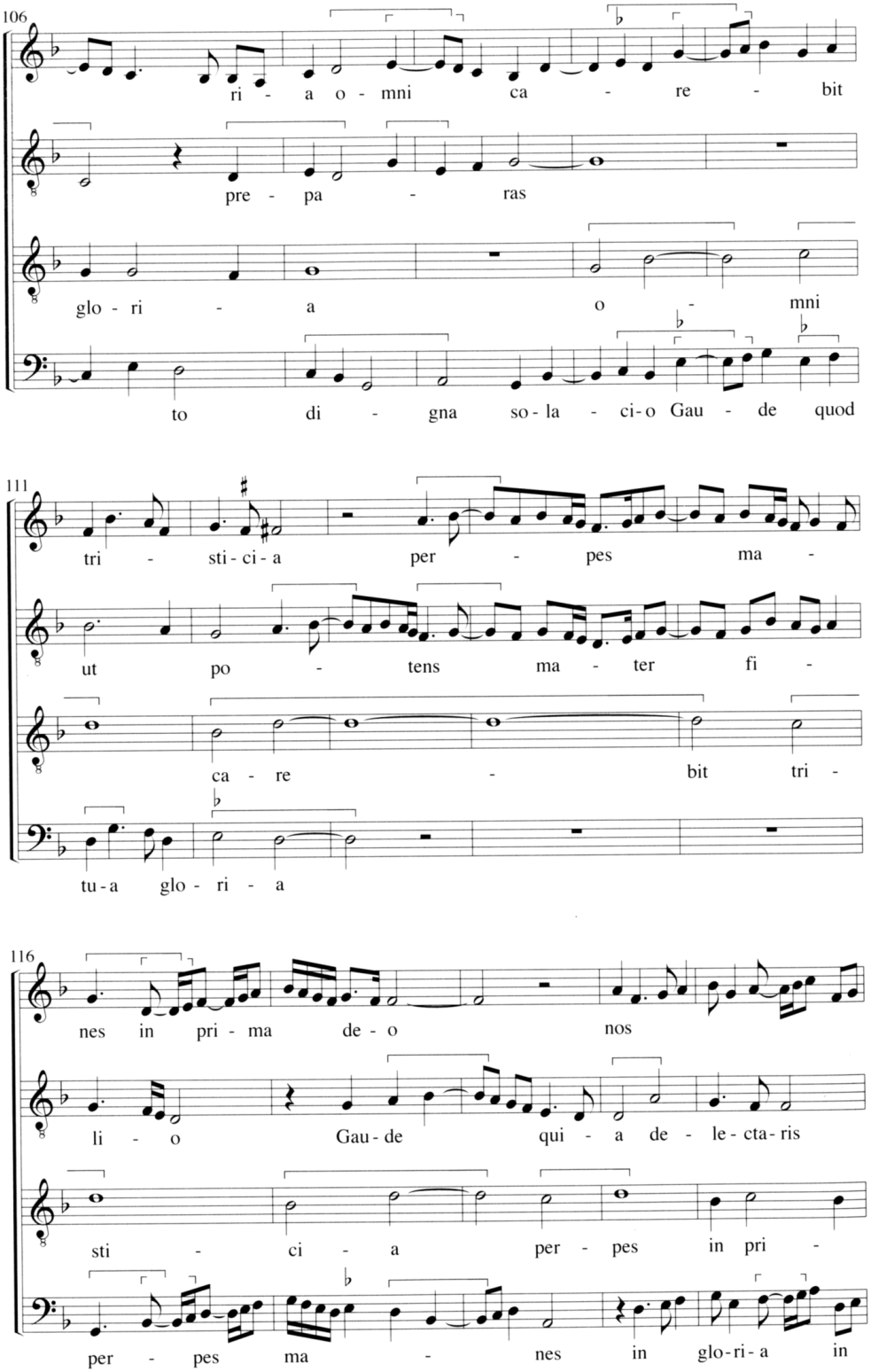

31
es ut mun - dum sol ex ra - di - o
es ut mun - dum sol ex ra -
fa - ci - es
es Gau - de cu - i o -
36
Gau - de cu-i o - be - di - unt et te re-ve -
di - o et
be - di - unt et te re-ve - ra fi - ci -
41
ra si - ti - unt ti-bi se sub - i - ci - unt
te re - ve - ra si - ti - unt ti - bi se sub - i - ci-unt
unt

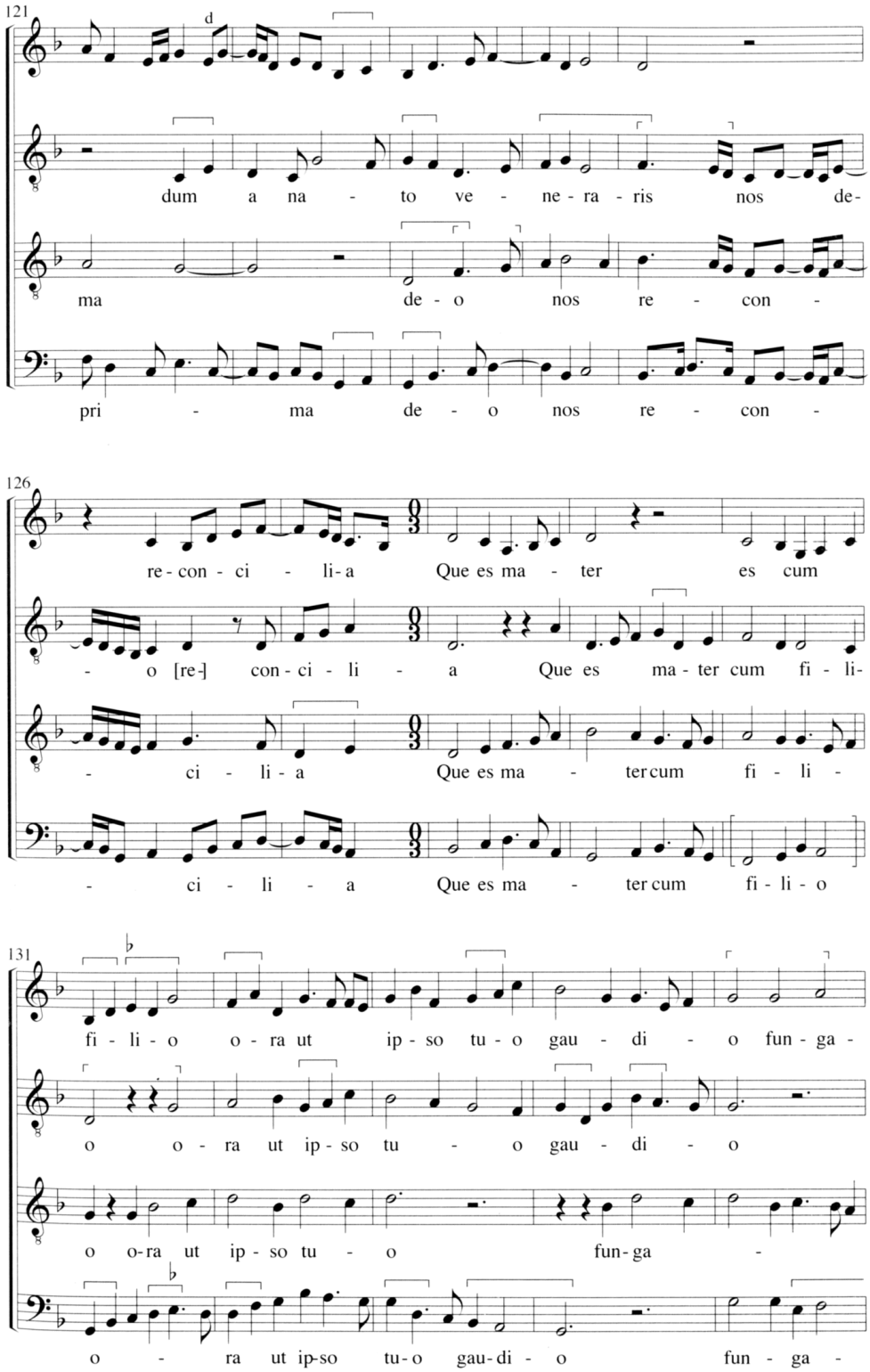

46
an- ge - li ob- se - qui - o Gau - de quod tu -
an- ge - li ob- se - qui - o Gau - de quod
Gau - de
Gau - de quod tu -
51
i ser - vu - li nunc et in fi - ne se- cu - li et hoc
tu - i ser - vu - li nunc et in
quod tu -
i ser - - - vu - li
56
in i - ctu o - cu- li ut fru - un - tur
fi - ne se - cu - li
- i fru -
se - cu - li et hoc in i - ctu o - cu - li

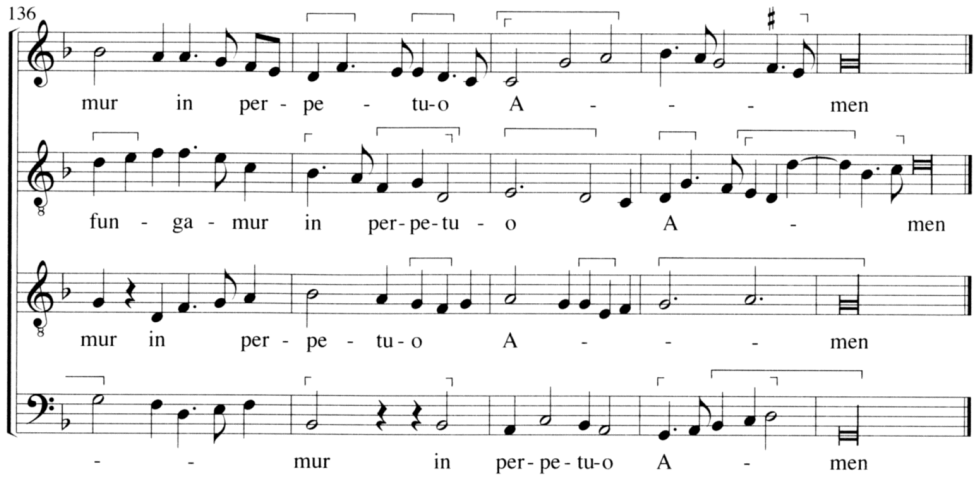

61
pre - mi - o
Gau - de de - o
un - tur pre - mi - o
e f
ut fru - un - tur pre - mi - o Gau - de
66
Gau - de de - o vi - ci -
vi - ci - ni - or et
tu
de - o vi - ci - ni-or et ad pre - can - dum
71
ni - or ad pre - can - dum po - ti-or in
ad pre - can - dum po - - - ti-or
cun - ctis es po - ten - ti - or
po - ti - or tu cun - ctis es po-ten -


76
sum - mo se-des so - li - o
in sum - mo se - des so - li - o
se - des so - li - o
- ti-or in sum-mo se - des so - li - o
81
Gau - de quod san - ctos
Gau - de quod San - ctos su - pe -
86
Gau - de qui - a de -
su - pe - ras tu hoc que -
- - ras


91
- - le - cta - ris dum a na - to ve -
sto im - pe - ras
Gau - de
96
ne - ra - ris ei sem - per con - iun - ga - ris tan - to di - gna fi - li -
qui - a de - le - cta -
100
o Gau - de quod tu - a glo -
dum ad pre - can - dum te
Gau - de quod tu - a
ris ei sem - per con - iun - ga - ris tan -


106
ri - a o - mni ca - re - bit
pre - pa - ras
glo - ri - a o - mni
to di - gna so - la - ci - o Gau - de quod
111
tri - sti - ci - a per - pes ma -
ut po - tens ma - ter fi -
ca - re - bit tri -
tu - a glo - ri - a
116
nes in pri - ma de - o nos
li - o Gau - de qui - a de - le - cta - ris
sti - ci - a per - pes in pri -
per - pes ma - nes in glo - ri - a in


121
d
dum a na - to ve - ne - ra - ris nos de-
ma de - o nos re - con -
pri - ma de - o nos re - con -
126
re - con - ci - li - a Que es ma - ter es cum
- o [re-] con - ci - li - a Que es ma - ter cum fi - li-
- ci - li - a Que es ma - ter cum fi - li -
- ci - li - a Que es ma - ter cum fi - li - o
131
fi - li - o o - ra ut ip - so tu - o gau - di - o fun - ga -
o o - ra ut ip - so tu - o gau - di - o
o o-ra ut ip - so tu - o fun - ga -
o - ra ut ip-so tu - o gau - di - o fun - ga -


136
mur in per - pe - tu-o A - - - men
fun - ga - mur in per-pe-tu - o A - men
mur in per - pe - tu - o A - - - men
- - mur in per-pe-tu-o A - men